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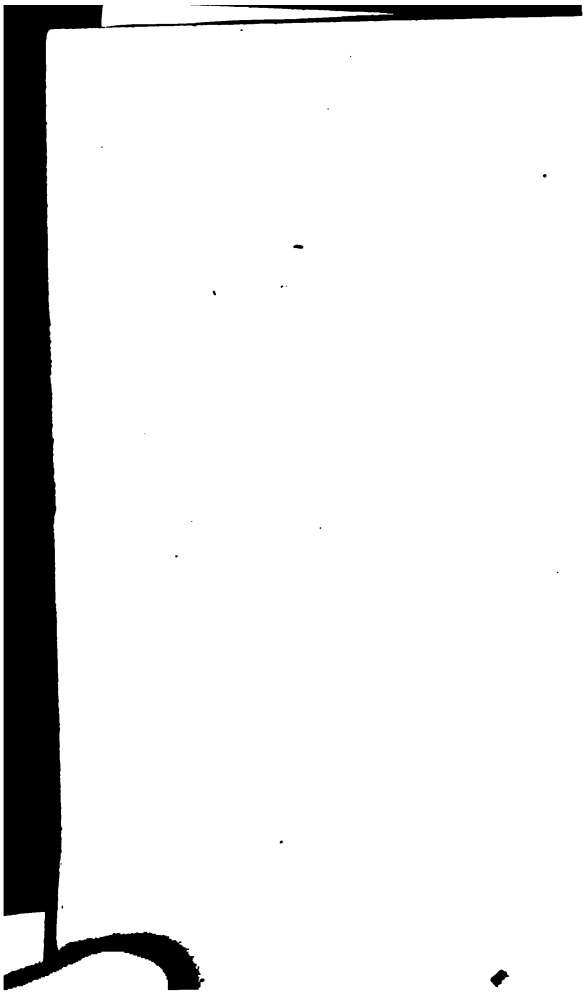

WORDS OF WASHINGTON.

SELECTED BY

JAMES PARTON.

BOSTON:
JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY,
Late Ticknor & Fields, and Fields, Osgood, & Co.
1872.

1. American literature [illegible]
A.H.

ASTOR LI[illegible]
[illegible] 24 1871
NEW-YORK

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1871,
BY JAMES R. OSGOOD & CO.,
in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

UNIVERSITY PRESS: WELCH, BIGELOW, & CO.,
CAMBRIDGE.

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PREFATORY.

THE

CHARACTER OF GEORGE WASHINGTON,

AS DELINEATED BY THOMAS JEFFERSON.

I THINK I knew General Washington intimately and thoroughly; and were I called on to delineate his character, it should be in terms like these.

His mind was great and powerful, without being of the very first order; his penetration strong, though not so acute as that of a Newton, Bacon, or Locke; and, as far as he saw, no judgment was ever sounder. It was slow in operation, being little aided by invention or imagination, but sure in conclusion. Hence the common remark of his officers of the advantage he derived from councils of war, where, hearing all suggestions, he selected whatever was best; and certainly no general ever planned his battles more judiciously. But if deranged during the course of the action, if any member of his plan was dislocated by sudden circumstances, he was slow in readjustment. The consequence was that he often failed in the field, and *rarely against* an enemy in station, as at Bos-

ton and York. He was incapable of fear, meeting personal dangers with the calmest unconcern. Perhaps the strongest feature in his character was prudence, never acting until every circumstance, every consideration, was maturely weighed; refraining if he saw a doubt, but, when once decided, going through with his purpose, whatever obstacles opposed. His integrity was most pure, his justice the most inflexible I have ever known, no motives of interest or consanguinity, of friendship or hatred, being able to bias his decision. He was, indeed, in every sense of the words, a wise, a good, and a great man. His temper was naturally irritable and high-toned; but reflection and resolution had obtained a firm and habitual ascendency over it. If ever, however, it broke its bonds, he was most tremendous in his wrath. In his expenses he was honorable, but exact; liberal in contributions to whatever promised utility; but frowning and unyielding on all visionary projects and all unworthy calls on his charity. His heart was not warm in its affections; but he exactly calculated every man's value, and gave him a solid esteem proportioned to it. His person, you know, was fine, his stature exactly what one would wish, deportment easy, erect, and noble; the best horseman of his age, and the most graceful figure that could be seen on horseback. Although in the circle of his friends, where he might be unreserved with safety, he took a free share in conversation, his colloquial talents were not above mediocrity, possessing neither copiousness of ideas nor fluency of words. *In public,* when called on for a sudden opinion, he

was unready, short, and embarrassed. Yet he wrote readily, rather diffusely, in an easy and correct style. This he had acquired by conversation with the world, for his education was merely reading, writing, and common arithmetic, to which he added surveying at a later day. His time was employed in action chiefly, reading little, and that only in agriculture and English history. His correspondence became necessarily extensive, and, with journalizing his agricultural proceedings, occupied most of his leisure hours within doors. On the whole, his character was, in its mass, perfect, in nothing bad, in few points indifferent; and it may truly be said, that never did nature and fortune combine more perfectly to make a man great, and to place him in the same constellation with whatever worthies have merited from man an everlasting remembrance. For his was the singular destiny and merit of leading the armies of his country successfully through an arduous war for the establishment of its independence; of conducting its councils through the birth of a government, new in its forms and principles, until it had settled down into a quiet and orderly training, and of scrupulously obeying the laws through the whole of his career, civil and military, of which the world furnishes no other example.

To DOCTOR WALTER JONES, January 2, 1814.
6 *Jefferson's Works*, 286.

WORDS OF WASHINGTON.

YOUTH

YOUTH.

1. RULES WRITTEN FOR HIS OWN GUIDANCE IN HIS FOURTEENTH YEAR.

EVERY action in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those present.

In the presence of others, sing not to yourself with a humming noise, nor drum with your fingers or feet.

Be no flatterer; neither play with any one that delights not to be played with.

Read no letters, books, or papers in company; but when there is a necessity for doing it, you must ask leave. Come not near the books or writings of any one so as to read them, unless desired, nor give your opinion of them unasked; also, look not nigh when another is writing a letter.

Show not yourself glad at the misfortune of another, though he were your enemy.

When you meet with one of greater quality than yourself, stop and retire, especially if it be

at a door or any strait place, to give way for him to pass.

Let your discourse with men of business be short and comprehensive.

In visiting the sick, do not presently play the physician, if you be not knowing therein.

Undertake not to teach your equal in the art himself professes; it savors of arrogancy.

When a man does all he can, though it succeeds not well, blame not him that did it.

Being to advise or reprehend any one, consider whether it ought to be in public or in private, presently or at some other time, in what terms to do it; and in reproving show no signs of choler, but do it with sweetness and mildness.

Take all admonitions thankfully, in what time or place soever given; but afterwards, not being culpable, take a time or place convenient to let him know it that gave them.

Mock not, nor jest at anything of importance; break no jests that are sharp-biting, and if you deliver anything witty and pleasant, abstain from laughing thereat yourself.

Wherein you reprove another be unblamable yourself; for example is more prevalent than precepts.

Use no reproachful language against any one, neither curse, nor revile.

Be not hasty to believe flying reports to the disparagement of any.

In your apparel, be modest, and endeavor to accommodate nature, rather than to procure admiration; keep to the fashion of your equals, such as

are civil and orderly with respect to times and places.

Play not the peacock, looking everywhere about you to see if you be well decked, if your shoes fit well, if your stockings sit neatly, and clothes handsomely.

Associate yourself with men of good quality, if you esteem your own reputation; for it is better to be alone than in bad company.

Let your conversation be without malice or envy, for it is a sign of a tractable and commendable nature; and in all causes of passion admit reason to govern.

Be not immodest in urging your friend to discover a secret.

Utter not base and frivolous things amongst grave and learned men; nor very difficult questions or subjects among the ignorant: nor things hard to be believed.

Speak not of doleful things in time of mirth, nor at the table; speak not of melancholy things, as death, and wounds, and if others mention them change, if you can, the discourse. Tell not your dreams but to your intimate friend.

Be not tedious in discourse; make not many digressions, nor repeat often the same manner of discourse.

Be not angry at table, whatever happens, and if you have reason to be so, show it not; put on a cheerful countenance, especially if there be strangers, for good-humor makes one dish of meat a feast.

Set not yourself at the upper end of the table;

but if it be your due, or that the master of the house will have it so, contend not, lest you should trouble the company.

Let your recreations be manful, not sinful.

Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience.

1746. 2 *Sparks's Writings of Washington*, 412.

2. A SURVEYOR AT SIXTEEN.

INCE you received my letter of October last I have not slept above three or four nights in a bed, but, after walking a good deal all the day, I have lain down before the fire upon a little hay, straw, fodder, or a bear-skin, whichever was to be had, with man, wife, and children, like dogs and cats; and happy is he who gets the berth nearest the fire. Nothing would make it pass off tolerably but a good reward. A doubloon is my constant gain every day that the weather will permit of my going out, and sometimes six pistoles. The coldness of the weather will not allow of my making a long stay, as the lodging is rather too cold for the time of year. I have never had my clothes off, but have lain and slept in them, except the few nights I have been in Fredericktown.

To A FRIEND, March, 1748. 2 *Sparks*, 419.

AS A YOUTHFUL SOLDIER IN THE OLD FRENCH WAR.

AS A YOUTHFUL SOLDIER IN THE OLD FRENCH WAR.

1. HIS MODEST CONFIDENCE AT TWENTY-TWO.

THE command of the whole forces is what I neither look for, expect, nor desire; for I must be impartial enough to confess it is a charge too great for my youth and inexperience to be intrusted with. Knowing this, I have too sincere a love for my country to undertake that which may tend to the prejudice of it. But if I could entertain hopes that you thought me worthy of the post of lieutenant-colonel, and would favor me so far as to mention it at the appointment of officers, I could not but entertain a true sense of the kindness. I flatter myself, that, under a skilful commander, or man of sense (whom I most sincerely wish to serve under), with my own application and diligent study of my duty, I shall be able to conduct my steps without censure, and in time render myself worthy of the promotion that I shall be favored with now.

To RICHARD CORBIN, *of the Governor of Virginia's Council*, March, 1754. 2 *Sparks*, 3.

2. HE WILL HAVE JUST PAY OR NO PAY.

IVING up my commission is quite contrary to my intention. Nay, I ask it as a greater favor than any amongst the many I have received from your Honor to confirm it to me. But let me serve voluntarily; then I will, with the greatest pleasure in life, devote my services to the expedition without any other reward than the satisfaction of serving my country; but to be slaving dangerously for the shadow of pay, through woods, rocks, mountains, — I would rather prefer the great toil of a daily laborer, and dig for a maintenance, provided I were reduced to the necessity, than serve upon such ignoble terms; for I really do not see why the lives of his Majesty's subjects in Virginia should be of less value than of those in other parts of his American dominions, especially when it is well known that we must undergo double their hardship.

To the GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA, May 18, 1754.
2 *Sparks*, 17.

3. COLONIAL OFFICERS MUST STAND UPON THE SAME FOOTING AS BRITISH OFFICERS.

HOPE Captain Mackay will have more sense than to insist upon any unreasonable distinction because he and his officers have commissions from his Majesty. Let him consider, though we are greatly inferior in respect to advantages of profit, yet we have the *same spirit* to serve our gracious King as they *have, and are as* ready and willing to sacrifice our

lives for our country's good. And here, once more and for the last time, I must say, that it will be a circumstance which will act upon some officers of this regiment beyond all measure, to be obliged to serve upon such different terms, when their lives, their fortunes, and their operations are equally, and, I dare say, as effectually exposed, as those of others, who are happy enough to have King's commissions.

To the GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA, June 10, 1754.
1 *Sparks*, 41.

4. HARDSHIPS OF THE SERVICE.

WAS out last winter from the 1st of November till some time in January; and notwithstanding I had a good tent, was as properly prepared, and as well guarded, in every respect, as I could be against the weather, yet the cold was so intense that it was scarcely supportable. I believe out of the five or six men that went with me, three of them, though they were as well clad as they could be, were rendered useless by the frost, and were obliged to be left upon the road.

To WILLIAM FAIRFAX, *of the King's Council in Virginia*, August 11, 1754. 2 *Sparks*, 55.

5. THE DISPUTES WITH GENERAL BRADDOCK.

HE General, from frequent breaches of contract, has lost all patience; and, for want of that temper and moderation which should be used by a man of sense

upon these occasions, will, I fear, represent us in a light we little deserve; for, instead of blaming the individuals, as he ought, he charges all his disappointments to public supineness, and looks upon the country, I believe, as void of honor and honesty. We have frequent disputes on this head, which are maintained with warmth on both sides, especially on his, as he is incapable of arguing without it, or giving up any point he asserts, be it ever so incompatible with reason or common sense.

To WILLIAM FAIRFAX, June 7, 1755. 2 *Sparks*, 77.

6. HE GIVES GENERAL BRADDOCK GOOD ADVICE.

IN the letter which I wrote you from George's Creek, I acquainted you, that, unless the number of wagons was retrenched, and the carriage-horses increased, we should never be able to see Fort Duquesne. This, in two days afterwards (which was about the time they got to the Little Meadows, with some of their foremost wagons and strongest teams), they themselves were convinced of; for they found that, besides the extreme difficulty of getting the wagons along at all, they had often a line of three or four miles in length; and the soldiers guarding them were so dispersed, that, if we had been attacked either in front, centre, or rear, the part so attacked must have been cut off, or totally routed, before they could be sustained by any other corps.

At the Little Meadows a second council was *called, (for* there had been one before,) wherein the *urgency for horses* was again represented to the

officers of the different corps, and how laudable a further retrenchment of their baggage would be, that the spare ones might be turned over for the public service. In order to encourage this, I gave up my best horse, which I have never heard of since, and took no more baggage than half my portmanteau would easily contain. It is said, however, that the number reduced by this second attempt was only from two hundred and ten or twelve to two hundred, which had no perceivable effect.

The General, before they met in council, asked my private opinion concerning the expedition. I urged him, in the warmest terms I was able, to push forward, if he even did it with a small but chosen band, with such artillery and light stores as were necessary; leaving the heavy artillery, baggage, and the like, with the rear division of the army, to follow by slow and easy marches, which they might do safely, while we were advanced in front. As one reason to support this opinion, I urged, that, if we could credit our intelligence, the French were weak at the Fork at present, but hourly expected reinforcements. This advice prevailed. . . . .

We set out with less than thirty carriages, including those that transported the ammunition for the howitzers, twelve-pounders, and six-pounders, and all of them strongly horsed; which was a prospect that conveyed infinite delight to my mind, though I was excessively ill at the time. But this prospect was soon clouded, and my hopes brought very low indeed, when I found that, instead of

pushing on with vigor, without regarding a little rough road, they were halting to level every mole-hill, and to erect bridges over every brook, by which means we were four days in getting twelve miles.

To his brother, JOHN A. WASHINGTON, June 28, 1755. 2 *Sparks*, 81.

7. THE CONSEQUENCES.

WE were attacked by a party of French and Indians, whose number, I am persuaded, did not exceed three hundred men; while ours consisted of about one thousand three hundred well-armed troops, chiefly regular soldiers, who were struck with such a panic that they behaved with more cowardice than it is possible to conceive. The officers behaved gallantly, in order to encourage their men, for which they suffered greatly, there being near sixty killed and wounded, a large proportion of the number we had.

The Virginia troops showed a good deal of bravery, and were nearly all killed; for I believe, out of three companies that were there, scarcely thirty men are left alive. Captain Peyrouny, and all his officers down to a corporal, were killed. Captain Polson had nearly as hard a fate, for only one of his was left. In short, the dastardly behavior of those they call regulars exposed all others that were inclined to do their duty to almost certain death; and at last, in despite of all the efforts of the officers to the contrary, they ran, as sheep

pursued by dogs, and it was impossible to rally them.

The General was wounded, of which he died three days after. Sir Peter Halket was killed in the field, where died many other brave officers. I luckily escaped without a wound, though I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me. Captains Orme and Morris, two of the aides-de-camp, were wounded early in the engagement, which rendered the duty harder upon me, as I was the only person then left to distribute the General's orders, which I was scarcely able to do, as I was not half recovered from a violent illness that had confined me to my bed and a wagon for above ten days.

To his MOTHER, July 18, 1755. 2 *Sparks*, 87.

8. A COMMANDING OFFICER SHOULD HAVE THE APPOINTING OF HIS SUBORDINATES.

ERE I to accept the command of the Virginia troops after Braddock's defeat, I should insist upon some things which ignorance and inexperience made me overlook before, particularly that of having the officers appointed, in some measure, with my advice and with my concurrence. It appears to me strange that a commanding officer should not have this liberty, when it is considered how much the conduct and bravery of an officer influence the men, how much a commanding officer is answerable for the behavior of the inferior officers, and *how much his* good or ill success, in time of action,

depends upon the conduct of each particular one, especially, too, in this kind of fighting, where, being dispersed, each and every one of them has a greater liberty to misbehave than if he were regularly and compactly drawn up under the eyes of his superior.

On the other hand, how little credit is given to a commander, who, after a defeat, in relating the cause of it, justly lays the blame on some individual whose cowardly behavior betrayed the whole to ruin! How little does the world consider the circumstances, and how apt are mankind to level their vindictive censures against the unfortunate chief, who perhaps merited least of the blame!

Does it not appear, then, that the appointing of officers is a thing of the utmost consequence, a thing that requires the greatest circumspection? Ought it to be left to blind chance, or, what is still worse, to partiality? Should it not be left to a man whose life, and, what is still dearer, whose honor, depends on their good behavior?

To WARNER LEWIS, *of the Virginia Legislature*, August 14, 1755. 2 *Sparks*, 94.

9. MILITIA MUST SUBMIT TO DISCIPLINE.

SEE the growing insolence of the soldiers, and the indolence and inactivity of the officers, who are all sensible how limited their punishments are, compared with what they ought to be. In fine, I can plainly see, *that under the* present establishment we shall *become a nuisance,* an insupportable charge to our

country, and never answer any one expectation of the Assembly. And here I must assume the freedom to express some surprise that we alone should be so tenacious of our liberty as not to invest a power, where interest and policy so unanswerably demand it, and whence so much good must consequently ensue. Do we not know that every nation under the sun finds its account therein, and that, without it, no order or regularity can be observed? Why then should it be expected from us, who are all young and inexperienced, to govern and keep up a proper spirit of discipline without laws, when the best and most experienced can scarcely do it with them? If we consult our interest, I am sure it loudly calls for them. I can confidently assert that recruiting, clothing, arming, maintaining, and subsisting soldiers, who have since deserted, have cost the country an immense sum, which might have been prevented, were we under restraints that would terrify the soldiers from such practices.

To the GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA, October 11, 1755.
2 *Sparks*, 105.

10. ADVICE TO SUBALTERN OFFICERS.

EMEMBER that actions, and not the commission, make the officer, and that more is expected from him than the title. Do not forget that there ought to be a time appropriated to attain knowledge, as well as to indulge in pleasure. And as we now have *no opportunities* to improve from example,

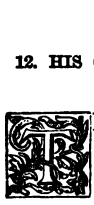
let us read for this desirable end. Bland's and other treatises will give the proper information. January 8, 1756. 2 *Sparks*, 123.

11. HIS LOYALTY TO BRITAIN.

HUMBLY humbly conceive, where we can pattern after our mother country upon as easy terms as pursuing plans of our own, that we should at least pay that deference to her judgment and experience.

To the GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA, April 16, 1756. 2 *Sparks*, 139.

12. HIS COMPASSION FOR THE VICTIMS OF INDIAN OUTRAGE.



HE supplicating tears of the women and moving petitions of the men melt me into such deadly sorrow, that I solemnly declare, if I know my own mind, I could offer myself a willing sacrifice to the butchering enemy, provided that would contribute to the people's ease.

To the GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA, April 19, 1756. 2 *Sparks*, 144.

13. AGAINST SWEARING IN CAMP.

OLONEL WASHINGTON has observed that the men of his regiment are very profane and reprobate. He takes this opportunity to inform them of his great *displeasure* at such practices, and assures them

that, if they do not leave them off, they shall be severely punished. The officers are desired, if they hear any man swear, or make use of an oath or execration, to order the offender twenty-five lashes immediately, without a court-martial. For the second offence he will be more severely punished. August, 1756. 2 *Sparks*, 167.

14. THE CURSE OF UNDISCIPLINED MILITIA ENLISTED FOR SHORT TERMS.

HE waste of provision they make is unaccountable; no method or order in being served or purchasing at the best rates, but quite the reverse. Allowance for each man, as in the case of other soldiers, they look upon as the highest indignity, and would sooner starve than carry a few days' provision on their backs for conveniency. But upon their march, when breakfast is wanted, they knock down the first beef they meet with, and, after regaling themselves, march on till dinner, when they take the same method, and so for supper, to the great oppression of the people. Or, if they chance to impress cattle for provision, the valuation is left to ignorant and interested neighbors, who have suffered by those practices, and, despairing of their pay, exact high prices, and thus the public is imposed upon at all events. I might add, I believe, that, for the want of proper laws to govern the militia (I cannot ascribe it to any other cause), they are obstinate, self-willed, perverse, of little or no *service to the* people, and very burdensome to

the country. Every individual has his own crude notions of things, and must undertake to direct. If his advice is neglected, he thinks himself slighted, abused, and injured; and, to redress his wrongs, will depart for his home. These, sir, are literally matters of fact, partly from persons of undoubted veracity, but chiefly from my own observations.

To the GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA, November 9, 1756. 2 *Sparks*, 195.

15. THE SERVICE EXPECTED OF HIM.

HAVE been posted for twenty months past upon our cold and barren frontiers, to perform, I think I may say, impossibilities; that is, to protect from the cruel incursions of a crafty, savage enemy a line of inhabitants of more than three hundred and fifty miles in extent, with a force inadequate to the task. By this means I am become in a manner an exile, and seldom informed of those opportunities, which I might otherwise embrace, of corresponding with my friends.

To A MERCHANT *in London*, April 15, 1757. 2 *Sparks*, 231.

16. BOUNTY-JUMPING IN THE OLDEN TIME.

OUR HONOR may observe by the enclosed list of deserters, all of whom have left the regiment since the last return, and after having received their clothes, [illegible]ms, and bounty money, how prevalent still is

that infamous practice among the dastardly drafts, especially at this garrison, where I indulge them in everything but idleness, and in that I cannot, the nature of the work requiring the contrary. Lenity, so far from producing its desired effects, rather emboldens them in these villanous acts.

To the GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA, September 17, 1757.
2 *Sparks*, 250.

A COUNTRY GENTLEMAN BEFORE THE REVOLUTION.

A COUNTRY GENTLEMAN BEFORE THE REVOLUTION.

1. HE WAS A BOOK FARMER.

IN my last, among other things, I desired you would send me, besides a small octavo volume, the best system now extant of agriculture. Since then I have been told that there is one, lately published, done by various hands, but chiefly collected from the papers of Mr. Hale. If this is known to be the best, pray send it, but not if any other is in higher esteem.

To ROBERT CARY, *in London*, June 12, 1759. 2 *Sparks*, 331.

2. HE DESIRES TO VISIT LONDON.

THE longing desire, which for many years I have had, of visiting the great metropolis of that kingdom is not in the least abated.

To the same, and same date. 2 *Sparks*, 331.

3. HIS TASTE IN DRESS.

WANT neither lace nor embroidery. Plain clothes, with gold or silver buttons, if worn in genteel dress, are all that I desire. I have hitherto had my clothes made by one Charles Lawrence. Whether it be the fault of the tailor, or of the measure sent, I cannot say; but certain it is my clothes have never fitted me well. I therefore leave the choice of the workman to you. I enclose a measure, and, for a further direction, I think it not amiss to add, that my stature is six feet; otherwise rather slender than corpulent.

To RICHARD WASHINGTON, *in London*, October 20, 1761.
2 *Sparks*, 337.

4. THE CAREFUL PLANTER.

PERCEIVE you bring the shortness of some of the bundles of the tobacco shipped in the "Bland" to account for the lowness of the price. That some of the tobacco was small, I shall not undertake to dispute; but at the same time I must observe that it was clean and neatly handled, which I apprehended would have rendered the other objection of very little weight. As to stemming my tobacco, in the manner you recommend, I would readily do it if the returns would be equivalent to the trouble, and loss of the stem; and of this I shall be a tolerable judge, as I am at no small pains this year to try the *quality with* the advantages and disadvantages of

different kinds of tobaccos, and shall at the same time find out the difference between a hogshead of leaf and a hogshead of stemmed tobacco. By comparing the loss of the one with the extra price of the other, I shall be able to determine which is the best to pursue, and follow that method which promises the most certain advantages.

To ROBERT CARY AND COMPANY, *London*, May 28, 1762.
12 *Sparks*, 257.

5. THE WEIGHT OF WHEAT IN WASHINGTON'S DAY.

YOU were saying that the standard for wheat in Philadelphia was fifty-eight pounds, and at Lancaster sixty pounds. I have taken some pains to inquire, likewise, into this matter, and am informed that fifty-eight is a much more general weight than the other all over Pennsylvania and Maryland (where their wheat is better than ours can be, till we get into the same good management), and Colonel Tucker's miller, a man from the northward upon high wages, whom I saw whilst I was last below, assured me that very few bushels, out of the many thousands of wheat which he receives for Colonel Tucker, reach fifty-eight pounds. However, that you may not think I have other motives than those declared for mentioning these things, I shall only observe that, as you are sensible by my present contract I am not restricted to weight, but obliged only to deliver clean wheat, and as good as the year and seasons will generally admit of, I will nevertheless, in order to remove every cause of

dispute which can possibly arise, fix the weight, if it is agreeable to you, at fifty-eight pounds per bushel, and to be paid a penny for every pound over that weight, and deduct a penny for every pound it is under.

To Messrs. CARLYLE AND ADAM, *Merchants, Alexandria*, March 9, 1765. 12 *Sparks*, 259.

6. HE WILL HAVE HIS RIGHTS.

TOBACCO, I well perceive, for a year or two past, has fallen in its value. From what causes I shall not take upon me to determine; and I am not so extravagant as to believe that my own and Master Custis's crops should fetch their usual prices, when other good tobacco met with abatements. But I am really selfish enough to expect that we ought to come in for a part of the good prices that are going, from a belief that our tobacco is of a quality not so much inferior to some that still sells well, and that so considerable a consignment, when confined in a manner to one house, as ours is, would lay claim to the best endeavors of the merchant in the sales, and in the return of goods; for many articles of which I pay exceeding heavily, another thing I cannot easily account for, unless it is on a presumption that they are bought at very long credits, which by no means ought to be the case. For, where a person has money in a merchant's hands, he should doubtless have all the benefits that can result from that money; and in a like manner, *where he pays* interest for the use of the mer-

chant's, should he be entitled to the same advantages; otherwise it might well be asked, For what purpose is it that interest is paid?

Once, upon my urging a complaint of this nature, you wrote me, that the goods ought to be sent back, and they should be returned upon the shopkeeper's hands in cases of imposition; but a moment's reflection points out the inconveniences of such a measure, unless the imposition be grossly abusive, or we could afford to have a year's stock beforehand. How otherwise can a person who imports bare requisites only submit to lie a year out of any particular article of clothing, or necessary for family use, and have recourse to such a tedious and uncertain way of relief as this, when possibly a tradesman would deny the goods and consequently refuse them? It is not to be done. We are obliged to acquiesce in the present loss, and hope for future redress.

These, gentlemen, are my sentiments, fully and candidly expressed, without any design, believe me, of giving you offence; but, as the selling of our tobaccos well, and the purchasing of our goods upon the best terms, are matters of the utmost consequence to our well-doing, it behooves me to be plain and sincere in my declarations on these points, previous to any change of measures, that I may stand acquitted of the imputation of fickleness, if I am at last forced to a discontinuance of my correspondence with your house.

To ROBERT CARY AND COMPANY, *London*, September 20, 1765. 12 *Sparks*, 261.

7. HIS GENEROSITY TO A FRIEND.

HAVING once or twice of late heard you speak highly of the New Jersey College, as if you had a desire of sending your son William there (who, I am told, is a youth fond of study and instruction, and disposed to a studious life, in following which he may not only promote his own happiness, but the future welfare of others), I should be glad, if you have no other objection to it than the expense, if you would send him to that college as soon as convenient, and depend on me for twenty-five pounds a year for his support, so long as it may be necessary for the completion of his education. If I live to see the accomplishment of this term, the sum here stipulated shall be annually paid; and if I die in the mean time, this letter shall be obligatory upon my heirs or executors, to do it according to the true intent and meaning hereof.

No other return is expected, or wished, for this offer, than that you will accept it with the same freedom and good-will with which it is made, and that you may not even consider it in the light of an obligation, or mention it as such; for, be assured, that from me it will never be known.

To WILLIAM RAMSAY, January 29, 1769. 2 *Sparks*, 350.

8. HIS OPPOSITION TO THE STAMP ACT.

AT a time when our lordly masters in Great Britain will be satisfied with nothing less than the deprivation of American free*dom*, it seems highly necessary that

something should be done to avert the stroke, and maintain the liberty which we have derived from our ancestors. But the manner of doing it, to answer the purpose effectually, is the point in question.

That no man should scruple, or hesitate a moment, to use arms in defence of so valuable a blessing, is clearly my opinion. Yet arms, I would beg leave to add, should be the last resource, the *dernier ressort.* We have already, it is said, proved the inefficacy of addresses to the throne, and remonstrances to Parliament. How far, then, their attention to our rights and privileges is to be awakened or alarmed, by starving their trade and manufactures, remains to be tried.

To GEORGE MASON, April 5, 1769. 2 *Sparks*, 351.

9. HE RESENTS AN INDIGNITY.

SIR, your impertinent letter was delivered to me yesterday. As I am not accustomed to receive such from any man, nor would have taken the same language from you personally, without letting you feel some marks of my resentment, I would advise you to be cautious in writing me a second of the same tenor. But for your stupidity and sottishness you might have known, by attending to the public gazette, that you had your full quantity of ten thousand acres of land allowed you, that is, nine thousand and seventy-three acres in the great track, and the remainder in the small tract.

But suppose you had really fallen short; do you

think your superlative merit entitles you to greater indulgence than others? Or, if it did, that I was to make it good to you, when it was at the option of the Governor and Council to allow but five hundred acres in the whole, if they had been so inclined? If either of these should happen to be your opinion, I am very well convinced that you will be singular in it; and all my concern is, that I ever engaged in behalf of so ungrateful a fellow as you are. But you may still be in need of my assistance, as I can inform you that your affairs, in respect to these lands, do not stand upon so solid a basis as you may imagine, and this you may take by way of hint.

To A MAJOR *who had served under him in the French War, and narrowly escaped being cashiered for his cowardice*, November, 1771. 2 *Sparks*, 367.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMY
OF THE REVOLUTION.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMY OF THE REVOLUTION.

1. THE ONLY EXTANT LETTER TO HIS WIFE.

MY DEAREST, — I am now set down to write to you on a subject which fills me with inexpressible concern, and this concern is greatly aggravated and increased, when I reflect upon the uneasiness I know it will give you. It has been determined in Congress that the whole army raised for the defence of the American cause shall be put under my care, and that it is necessary for me to proceed immediately to Boston to take upon me the command of it.

You may believe me, my dear Patsy, when I assure you, in the most solemn manner, that, so far from seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity, and that I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad, if my stay were to be seven times

seven years. But as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking it is designed to answer some good purpose. You might, and I suppose did, perceive, from the tenor of my letters, that I was apprehensive I could not avoid this appointment, as I did not pretend to intimate when I should return. That was the case. It was utterly out of my power to refuse this appointment, without exposing my character to such censures as would have reflected dishonor upon myself and given pain to my friends. This, I am sure, could not, and ought not, to be pleasing to you, and must have lessened me considerably in my own esteem. I shall rely, therefore, confidently on that Providence which has heretofore preserved and been bountiful to me, not doubting but that I shall return safe to you in the fall. I shall feel no pain from the toil or the danger of the campaign; my unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness I know you will feel from being left alone. I therefore beg that you will summon your whole fortitude, and pass your time as agreeably as possible. Nothing will give me so much sincere satisfaction as to hear this, and to hear it from your own pen. My earnest and ardent desire is, that you would pursue any plan that is most likely to produce content, and a tolerable degree of tranquillity; as it must add greatly to my uneasy feelings to hear that you are dissatisfied or complaining at what I really could not avoid.

As life is always uncertain, and common pru-

dence dictates to every man the necessity of settling his temporal concerns while it is in his power, and while the mind is calm and undisturbed, I have, since I came to this place (for I had not time to do it before I left home) got Colonel Pendleton to draft a will for me, by the directions I gave him, which will I now enclose. The provision made for you in case of my death will, I hope, be agreeable.

I shall add nothing more, as I have several letters to write, but to desire that you will remember me to your friends, and to assure you that I am, with the most unfeigned regard, my dear Patsy, your affectionate G. W.

To MARTHA WASHINGTON, June 18, 1775. 3 *Sparks*, 2.

2. CARE FOR POOR NEIGHBORS DURING HIS ABSENCE FROM HOME.

ET the hospitality of the house with respect to the poor be kept up. Let no one go hungry away. If any of this kind of people should be in want of corn, supply their necessities, provided it does not encourage them to idleness; and I have no objection to your giving my money in charity to the amount of forty or fifty pounds a year, when you think it well bestowed. What I mean by having no objection is, that it is my desire it should be done. You are to consider that neither myself nor wife is now in the way to do those good offices.

GENERAL WASHINGTON *to* LUND WASHINGTON, 1775. 2 *Irving's Life of Washington*, 112.

3. THE TREATMENT OF PRISONERS OF WAR.

UNDERSTAND that the officers engaged in the cause of liberty and their country, who by the fortune of war have fallen into your hands, have been thrown indiscriminately into a common jail appropriated for felons; that no consideration has been had for those of the most respectable rank, when languishing with wounds and sickness; and that some have been even amputated in this unworthy situation.

Let your opinion, sir, of the principle which actuates them be what it may, they suppose that they act from the noblest of all principles, a love of freedom and their country. But political principles, I conceive, are foreign to this point. The obligations arising from the rights of humanity and claims of rank are universally binding and extensive, except in case of retaliation. These, I should have hoped, would have dictated a more tender treatment of those individuals whom chance or war had put in your power. Nor can I forbear suggesting its fatal tendency to widen that unhappy breach which you, and those ministers under whom you act, have repeatedly declared your wish is to see forever closed.

My duty now makes it necessary to apprise you that, for the future, I shall regulate all my conduct towards those gentlemen who are or may be in our possession, exactly by the rule you shall *observe towards* those of ours now in your custody. *If severity* and hardship mark the line of your

conduct, painful as it may be to me, your prisoners will feel its effects. But if kindness and humanity are shown to ours, I shall with pleasure consider those in our hands only as unfortunate, and they shall receive from me that treatment to which the unfortunate are ever entitled.

I beg to be favored with an answer as soon as possible, and am, sir, your very humble servant.

To LIEUTENANT-GENERAL GAGE, August 11, 1775.
3 *Sparks*, 59.

4. HIS SECOND LETTER ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

IR, — I addressed you, on the 11th instant, in terms which gave the fairest scope for that humanity and politeness which were supposed to form a part of your character. I remonstrated with you on the unworthy treatment shown to the officers and citizens of America, whom the fortune of war, chance, or a mistaken confidence had thrown into your hands. Whether British or American mercy, fortitude, and patience are most pre-eminent; whether our virtuous citizens, whom the hand of tyranny has forced into arms to defend their wives, their children, and their property, or the mercenary instruments of lawless domination, avarice, and revenge, best deserve the appellation of rebels, and the punishment of that cord which your affected clemency has forborne to inflict; whether the authority under which I act is usurped or founded upon the genuine principles of liberty, — were *altogether foreign to* the subject. I purposely avoided

all political disquisition; nor shall I now avail myself of those advantages which the sacred cause of my country, of liberty, and of human nature give me over you; much less shall I stoop to retort and invective; but the intelligence you say you have received from our army requires a reply. I have taken time, sir, to make a strict inquiry, and find it has not the least foundation in truth. Not only your officers and soldiers have been treated with the tenderness due to fellow-citizens and brethren, but even those execrable parricides, whose counsels and aid have deluged their country with blood, have been protected from the fury of a justly enraged people. Far from compelling or permitting their assistance, I am embarrassed with the numbers who crowd to our camp, animated with the purest principles of virtue and love to their country.

You advise me to give free operation to truth, and to punish misrepresentation and falsehood. If experience stamps value upon counsel, yours must have a weight which few can claim. You best can tell how far the convulsion, which has brought such ruin on both countries, and shaken the mighty empire of Britain to its foundation, may be traced to these malignant causes.

You affect, sir, to despise all rank not derived from the same source with your own. I cannot conceive one more honorable than that which flows from the uncorrupted choice of a brave and free people, the purest source and original fountain of *all power*. Far from making it a plea for cruelty, *a mind of* true magnanimity and enlarged ideas *ould comprehend* and respect it.

What may have been the ministerial views which have precipitated the present crisis, Lexington, Concord, and Charlestown can best declare. May that God to whom you then appeal judge between America and you! Under his providence those who influence the counsels of America, and all the other inhabitants of the United Colonies, at the hazard of their lives, are determined to hand down to posterity those just and invaluable privileges which they received from their ancestors.

I shall now, sir, close my correspondence with you, perhaps forever. If your officers, our prisoners, receive a treatment from me different from that which I wished to show them, they and you will remember the occasion of it.

To the same, August, 1775. 3 *Sparks*, 65.

5. THREE PARAGRAPHS FROM HIS ORDERS TO GENERAL ARNOLD FOR THE GUIDANCE OF THAT OFFICER IN CANADA.

IF Lord Chatham's son* should be in Canada, and in any way should fall into your power, you are enjoined to treat him with all possible deference and respect. You cannot err in paying too much honor to the son of so illustrious a character, and so true a friend to America. Any other prisoners who may fall into your hands you will treat with as much humanity and kindness as may be consistent with your own safety and the public in-

* The young officer referred to resigned and returned to England as *soon as hostilities* began.

terest. Be very particular in restraining, not only your own troops, but the Indians, from all acts of cruelty and insult, which will disgrace the American arms and irritate our fellow-subjects against us.

You will be particularly careful to pay the full value for all provisions, or other accommodations, which the Canadians may provide for you on your march. By no means press them or any of their cattle into your service, but amply compensate those who voluntarily assist you. For this purpose you are provided with a sum of money in specie, which you will use with as much frugality and economy as your necessities and good policy will admit, keeping as exact an account as possible of your disbursements.

As the contempt of the religion of a country by ridiculing any of its ceremonies, or affronting its ministers or votaries, has ever been deeply resented, you are to be particularly careful to restrain every officer and soldier from such imprudence and folly, and to punish every instance of it. On the other hand, as far as lies in your power, you are to protect and support the free exercise of the religion of the country, and the undisturbed enjoyment of the rights of conscience in religious matters, with your utmost influence and authority.

To COLONEL BENEDICT ARNOLD, 1775. 3 *Sparks*, 86.

6. HE REITERATES ONE OF HIS COMMANDS.

ALSO give it in charge to you to avoid all disrespect of the religion of the country and its ceremonies. Prudence, policy, and a true Christian spirit will lead us to look with compassion upon their errors without insulting them. While we are contending for our own liberty, we should be very cautious not to violate the rights of conscience in others, ever considering that God alone is the Judge of the hearts of men, and to him only in this case they are answerable.

To the same, same date. 3 *Sparks*, 91.

7. RETALIATION.

HATEVER treatment Colonel Allen receives, whatever fate he undergoes, such exactly shall be the treatment and fate of Brigadier Prescott, now in our hands. The law of retaliation is not only justifiable in the eyes of God and man, but absolutely a duty, which in our present circumstances we owe to our relations, friends, and fellow-citizens.

To LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE, December 18, 1775. 3 *Sparks*, 202.

8. ON THE PURITAN CELEBRATION OF GUY FAWKES DAY.

S the Commander-in-Chief has been apprised of a design formed for the observance of that ridiculous and childish custom of burning the effigy of the Pope,

he cannot help expressing his surprise that there should be officers and soldiers in this army so void of common sense as not to see the impropriety of such a step at this juncture, at a time when we are soliciting and have really obtained the friendship and alliance of the people of Canada, whom we ought to consider as brethren embarked in the same cause, the defence of the general liberty of America. At such a juncture and in such circumstances, to be insulting their religion is so monstrous as not to be suffered or excused; indeed, instead of offering the most remote insult, it is our duty to address public thanks to these our brethren, as to them we are so much indebted for every late happy success over the common enemy in Canada.

Orderly Book, November 5, 1775. 3 *Sparks*, 144.

9. HE EXHORTS TO PERSEVERANCE.

AM very sorry to find by several paragraphs that both you and General Montgomery incline to quit the service. Let me ask you, sir, when is the time for brave men to exert themselves in the cause of liberty and their country, if this is not? Should any difficulties that they may have to encounter at this important crisis deter them? God knows, there is not a difficulty that you both very justly complain of which I have not in an eminent degree experienced, that I am not every day experiencing; but we must bear up against them, and make the best of mankind as they are, since we cannot have *them as* we wish.

To MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER, December 24, 1775. 3 *Sparks*, 209.

10. HIS DIFFICULTIES WHILE INVESTING BOSTON.

EARCH the volumes of history through, and I much question whether a case similar to ours is to be found; namely, to maintain a post against the flower of the British troops for six months together, without powder, and then to have one army disbanded and another to be raised within the same distance of a reinforced enemy. It is too much to attempt. What may be the final issue of the last manœuvre, time only can unfold. I wish this month was well over our heads. The same desire of retiring into a chimney-corner seized the troops of New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts, so soon as their time expired, as had wrought upon those of Connecticut, notwithstanding many of them made a tender of their services to continue till the lines could be sufficiently strengthened. We are now left with a good deal less than half-raised regiments, and about five thousand militia, who only stand engaged to the middle of this month, when, according to custom, they will depart, let the necessity of their stay be ever so urgent. Thus, for more than two months past, I have scarcely emerged from one difficulty before I have been plunged into another. How it will end, God in his great goodness will direct. I am thankful for his protection to this time. We are told that we shall soon get the army completed, but I have been told so many things which have never come to pass that I distrust everything.

To JOSEPH REED, January 4, 1776. 3 Sparks, 225.

11. A MILITARY AXIOM.

EXPERIENCE teaches us that it is much easier to prevent an enemy from posting themselves than it is to dislodge them after they have got possession.

To the PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS, January 11, 1776. 3 *Sparks*, 235.

12. HIS DEFERENCE TO PUBLIC OPINION.

YOU cannot render a more acceptable service, nor in my estimation give me a more convincing proof of your friendship, than by a free, open, and undisguised account of every matter relative to myself or conduct. I can bear to hear of imputed or real errors. The man who wishes to stand well in the opinion of others must do this, because he is thereby enabled to correct his faults or remove the prejudices which are imbibed against him. For this reason, I shall thank you for giving me the opinions of the world upon such points as you know me to be interested in; for, as I have but one capital object in view, I could wish to make my conduct coincide with the wishes of mankind as far as I can consistently; I mean, without departing from that great line of duty which, though hidden under a cloud for some time, from a peculiarity of circumstances, may nevertheless bear a scrutiny.

To JOSEPH REED, January 14, 1776. 3 *Sparks*, 237.

13. HIS ANXIOUS HOURS BEFORE BOSTON.

HE reflection on my situation, and that of this army, produces many an unhappy hour when all around me are wrapped in sleep. Few people know the predicament we are in, on a thousand accounts; fewer still will believe, if any disaster happens to these lines, from what cause it flows. I have often thought how much happier I should have been, if, instead of accepting the command under such circumstances, I had taken my musket on my shoulder and entered the ranks, or, if I could have justified the measure to posterity and my own conscience, had retired to the back country and lived in a wigwam. If I shall be able to rise superior to these and many other difficulties which might be enumerated, I shall most religiously believe that the finger of Providence is in it, to blind the eyes of our enemies; for surely, if we get well through this month, it must be for want of their knowing the disadvantages we labor under.

Could I have foreseen the difficulties which have come upon us, could I have known that such a backwardness would have been discovered among the old soldiers to the service, all the generals upon earth should not have convinced me of the propriety of delaying an attack upon Boston till this time.

To the same, same date. 3 *Sparks*, 238.

14. SHORT-TERM MILITIA NOT TRUSTWORTHY.

THE account given of the behavior of the men under General Montgomery is exactly consonant to the opinion I have formed of these people, and such as they will exhibit abundant proofs of in similar cases whenever called upon. Place them behind a parapet, a breastwork, stone-wall, or anything that will afford them shelter, and, from their knowledge of a firelock, they will give good account of the enemy; but I am as well convinced as if I had seen it, that they will not march boldly up to a work, nor stand exposed in a plain.

To the same, January 31, 1776. 3 *Sparks*, 277.

15. THE EVILS OF SHORT TERMS OF SERVICE.

THE cost of marching home one set of men, bringing in another, the havoc and waste occasioned by the first, the repairs necessary for the second, with a thousand incidental charges and inconveniences which have arisen, and which it is scarce possible either to recollect or describe, amount to nearly as much as the keeping up a respectable body of troops the whole time, ready for any emergency, would have done. To this may be added, that you never can have a well-disciplined army.

To bring men to be well acquainted with the duties of a soldier requires time. To bring them *under* proper discipline and subordination not only *requires time*, but is a work of great difficulty,

and, in this army, where there is so little distinction between the officers and soldiers, requires an uncommon degree of attention. To expect, then, the same service from raw and undisciplined recruits as from veteran soldiers, is to expect what never did and perhaps never will happen. Men who are familiarized to danger meet it without shrinking; whereas troops unused to service often apprehend danger where no danger is. Three things prompt men to a regular discharge of their duty in time of action; natural bravery, hope of reward, and fear of punishment. The two first are common to the untutored and the disciplined soldier; but the last most obviously distinguishes the one from the other. A coward, when taught to believe that, if he breaks his ranks and abandons his colors, he will be punished with death by his own party, will take his chance against the enemy; but a man who thinks little of the one, and is fearful of the other, acts from present feelings, regardless of consequences.

Again, men of a day's standing will not look forward; and from experience we find that, as the time approaches for their discharge, they grow careless of their arms, ammunition, and camp utensils. Nay, even the barracks themselves have felt uncommon marks of wanton depredation, and lay us under fresh trouble and additional expense in providing for every fresh set, when we find it next to impossible to procure such articles as are absolutely necessary in the first instance. To this may be added the seasoning which new recruits must have to a camp, and the loss consequent

thereupon. But this is not all. Men engaged for a short and limited time only have the officers too much in their power; for, to obtain a degree of popularity in order to induce a second enlistment, a kind of familiarity takes place which brings on a relaxation of discipline, unlicensed furloughs, and other indulgences incompatible with order and good government; by which means the latter part of the time, for which the soldier was engaged, is spent in undoing what you were aiming to inculcate in the first.

To the PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS, February 9, 1776.
3 *Sparks*, 279.

16. THE TORIES FLYING FROM BOSTON.

LL those who took upon themselves the style and title of government-men in Boston, in short, all those who have acted an unfriendly part in this great contest, have shipped themselves off in the same hurry, but under still greater disadvantages than the King's troops, being obliged to man their own vessels, as seamen enough could not be had for the King's transports, and submit to every hardship that can be conceived. One or two have done, what a great number ought to have done long ago, committed suicide. By all accounts, there never existed a more miserable set of beings than these wretched creatures now are. Taught to believe that the power of Great Britain was superior to all opposition, and, if not, that foreign *aid was at hand*, they were even higher and more

insulting in their opposition than the regulars. When the order issued, therefore, for embarking the troops in Boston, no electric shock, no sudden explosion of thunder, in a word, not the last trump, could have struck them with greater consternation. They were at their wits' end, and, conscious of their black ingratitude, they chose to commit themselves, in the manner I have above described, to the mercy of the waves at a tempestuous season, rather than meet their offended countrymen.

To JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON, March 31, 1776. 3 *Sparks*, 343.

17. CHAPLAINS.

THE honorable Continental Congress having been pleased to allow a chaplain to each regiment, the colonels or commanding officers of each regiment are directed to procure chaplains accordingly, persons of good characters and exemplary lives, and to see that all inferior officers and soldiers pay them a suitable respect. The blessing and protection of Heaven are at all times necessary, but especially so in times of public distress and danger. The General hopes and trusts that every officer and man will endeavor to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier defending the dearest rights and liberties of his country.

Orderly Book, July 9, 1776. 12 *Sparks*, 401.

18. HE MAINTAINS THE DIGNITY OF HIS POSITION.

BOUT three o'clock this afternoon I was informed that a flag from Lord Howe was coming up, and waited with two of our whale-boats until directions should be given. I immediately convened such of the general officers as were not upon other duty, who agreed in the opinion that I ought not to receive any letter directed to me as a private gentleman; but if otherwise, and the officer desired to come up to deliver the letter himself, as was suggested, he should come under a safe-conduct. Upon this, I directed Colonel Reed to go down and manage the affair under the above general instruction. On his return he informed me that, after the common civilities, the officer acquainted him that he had a letter from Lord Howe to Mr. Washington, which he showed under a superscription, "*To George Washington, Esq.*" Colonel Reed replied that there was no such person in the army, and that a letter intended for the General could not be received under such a direction. The officer expressed great concern, said it was a letter rather of a civil than military nature, that Lord Howe regretted he had not arrived sooner, that he (Lord Howe) had great powers. The anxiety to have the letter received was very evident, though the officer disclaimed all knowledge of its contents. However, Colonel Reed's instructions being positive, they parted. After they had got some distance, the officer with the flag again put about, *and asked* under what direction Mr. Washington *chose to be* addressed; to which Colonel Reed an-

swered, that his station was well known, and that certainly they could be at no loss how to direct to him. The officer said they knew and lamented it, and again repeated his wish that the letter could be received. Colonel Reed told him a proper direction would obviate all difficulties, and that this was no new matter, this subject having been fully discussed in the course of the last year, of which Lord Howe could not be ignorant; upon which they parted.

I would not upon any occasion sacrifice essentials to punctilio; but in this instance, the opinion of others concurring with my own, I deemed it a duty to my country and my appointment to insist upon that respect which, in any other but a public view, I would willingly have waived. Nor do I doubt, but, from the supposed nature of the message, and the anxiety expressed, they will either repeat their flag, or fall upon some mode to communicate the import and consequence of it.

To the PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS, July 14, 1776.
3 *Sparks*, 473.

19. FARRAGUT ANTICIPATED.

TWO ships, the Phœnix of forty-four guns, and the Rose, of twenty, ran by our batteries on the 12th, exhibiting a proof of what I had long most religiously believed; and that is, that a vessel, with a brisk wind and strong tide, cannot, unless by a chance shot, be stopped by a battery, unless you can place some obstruction in the water to impede her motion within reach of your guns.

To JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON, July 22, 1776.
4 *Sparks*, 18.

20. PRIVATE PROPERTY IN WAR-TIME.

THE burning of houses where the apparent good of the service is not promoted by it, and the pillaging of them at all times and upon all occasions, are to be discountenanced and punished with the utmost severity. In short, it is to be hoped that men who have property of their own, and a regard for the rights of others, will shudder at the thought of rendering any man's situation, to whose protection he has come, more insufferable than his open and avowed enemy would make it; when by duty and every rule of humanity they ought to aid, and not oppress, the distressed in their habitations. The distinction between a well-regulated army and a mob is the good order and discipline of the former, and the licentious and disorderly behavior of the latter. Men, therefore, who are not employed as mere hirelings, but have stepped forth in defence of everything that is dear and valuable, not only to themselves, but to posterity, should take uncommon pains to conduct themselves with the greatest propriety and good order, as their honor and reputation call loudly upon them to do it.

To MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM, August 25, 1776.
4 *Sparks*, 64.

21. THE PLAGUE OF MILITIA.

THE dependence which the Congress have placed upon the militia has already greatly injured, and I fear will totally *ruin* our cause. Being subject to no

control themselves, they introduce disorder among the troops whom we have attempted to discipline, while the change in their living brings on sickness; this causes an impatience to get home, which spreads universally, and introduces abominable desertions. In short, it is not in the power of words to describe the task I have to perform. Fifty thousand pounds would not induce me again to undergo what I have done.

To JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON, September 22, 1776. 4 *Sparks*, 104.

22. THE SAME SUBJECT.

HILE the only merit an officer possesses is his ability to raise men, while those men consider and treat him as an equal, and, in the character of an officer, regard him no more than a broomstick, being mixed together as one common herd, no order nor discipline can prevail; nor will the officer ever meet with that respect which is essentially necessary to due subordination.

To place any dependence upon militia is assuredly resting upon a broken staff. Men just dragged from the tender scenes of domestic life, unaccustomed to the din of arms, totally unacquainted with every kind of military skill, (which is followed by want of confidence in themselves when opposed to troops regularly trained, disciplined, and appointed, superior in knowledge and superior in arms,) are timid, and ready to fly from their own shadows. Besides, the sudden change in their

manner of living, particularly in their lodging, brings on sickness in many, impatience in all, and such an unconquerable desire of returning to their respective homes, that it not only produces shameful and scandalous desertions among themselves, but infuses the like spirit into others. Again, men accustomed to unbounded freedom and no control cannot brook the restraint which is indispensably necessary to the good order and government of an army without which licentiousness and every kind of disorder triumphantly reign. To bring men to a proper degree of subordination is not the work of a day, a month, or even a year; and, unhappily for us and the cause we are engaged in, the little discipline I have been laboring to establish in the army under my immediate command is in a manner done away by having such a mixture of troops as have been called together within these few months.

To the PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS, September 24, 1776. 4 *Sparks*, 113.

23. PLUNDERING BY OFFICERS AND MEN.

OR the most atrocious offence, one or two instances only excepted, a man receives no more than thirty-nine lashes; and these perhaps, through the collusion of the officer who is to see it inflicted, are given in such a manner as to become rather a matter of sport than punishment; but, when inflicted as they ought to be, many hardened fellows who *have been the* subjects have declared that, for a

bottle of rum, they would undergo a second operation. It is evident, therefore, that this punishment is inadequate to many crimes it is assigned to. As a proof of it, thirty or forty soldiers will desert at a time, and of late a practice prevails of the most alarming nature, and which will, if it cannot be checked, prove fatal both to the country and army; I mean the infamous practice of plundering. For, under the idea of Tory property, or property that may fall into the hands of the enemy, no man is secure in his effects, and scarcely in his person. In order to get at them, we have several instances of people being frightened out of their houses, under pretence of those houses being ordered to be burnt, and this is done with a view of seizing the goods; nay, in order that the villany may be more effectually concealed, some houses have actually been burnt to cover the theft. I have, with some others, used my utmost endeavors to stop this horrid practice; but under the present lust after plunder, and want of laws to punish offenders, I might almost as well attempt to move Mount Atlas. I have ordered instant corporal punishment upon every man who passes our lines or is seen with plunder, that the offenders may be punished for disobedience of orders; and I enclose to you the proceedings of a court-martial held upon an officer who, with a party of men, had robbed a house a little beyond our lines of a number of valuable goods, among which (to show that nothing escaped) were four large pier looking-glasses, women's clothes, and other articles, which, one would think, could be of no earthly use to

him. He was met by a major of brigade, who ordered him to return the goods, as taken contrary to general orders, which he not only refused to do, but drew up his party and swore that he would defend them at the hazard of his life; on which *I* ordered him to be arrested and tried for plundering, disobedience of orders, and mutiny. For the result, I refer to the proceedings of the court, whose judgment appeared so exceedingly extraordinary that I ordered a reconsideration of the matter, upon which, and with the assistance of fresh evidence, they made a shift to cashier him. I adduce this instance to give some idea to Congress of the current sentiments and general character of the officers who compose the present army; and to show how exceedingly necessary it is to be careful in the choice of the new set, even if it should take double the time to complete the requisite number. *To the same, same date.* 4 *Sparks*, 115.

24. THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD OFFICERS.

EARNESTLY recommend to you to be circumspect in your choice of officers. Take none but gentlemen; let no local attachments influence you; do not suffer your good-nature, when an application is made, to say yes, when you ought to say no; remember that it is a public, not a private cause, that is to be injured or benefited by your choice; recollect, also, that no instance has yet happened of good or bad behavior in a corps in our service, that has not originated with the officers. Do not

take old men, nor yet fill your corps with boys, especially for captains.

To COLONEL GEORGE BAYLOR, January 9, 1777.
4 *Sparks*, 269.

25. THE KIND OF MEN HE WISHED FOR HIS GUARD.

WANT to form a company for my guard. In doing this I wish to be extremely cautious, because it is more than probable that, in the course of the campaign, my baggage, papers, and other matters of great public import, may be committed to the sole care of these men. This being premised, in order to impress you with proper attention in the choice, I have to request that you will immediately furnish me with four men of your regiment; and, as it is my further wish that this company should look well and be nearly of a size, I desire that none of the men may exceed in stature five feet ten inches, nor fall short of five feet nine inches, sober, young, active, and well made. When I recommend care in your choice, I would be understood to mean men of good character in the regiment, that possess the pride of appearing clean and soldierlike. I am satisfied there can be no absolute security for the fidelity of this class of people, but yet I think it most likely to be found in those who have family connections in the country. You will therefore send me none but natives, and men of some property, if you have them. I must insist, that, in making this choice, you give no intimation of my preference of natives, as I do not want to create any invidious distinction between them and the foreigners.

To COLONEL ALEXANDER SPOTSWOOD, April 18, 1777.
4 *Sparks*, 407.

26. OFFICERS BREAKING THEIR PAROLE.

IF late several of our officers have broken their paroles and stolen away. This practice, ignominious to themselves, dishonorable to the service, and injurious to the officers of sentiment and delicacy, who remain behind to experience the rigors of resentment and distrust on their account, cannot be tolerated, whatever be the pretence. I have made a point of sending those back who have come under my observation; and I must desire you will do the same toward those who fall under yours.

To BRIGADIER-GENERAL MCDOUGALL, May 23, 1777.
4 *Sparks*, 431.

27. THE TERRIBLE WINTER AT VALLEY FORGE.

FOR some days past there has been little less than a famine in camp. A part of the army has been a week without any kind of flesh, and the rest three or four days. Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery, that they have not been ere this excited by their suffering to a general mutiny and dispersion. Strong symptoms, however, of discontent have appeared in particular instances; and nothing but the most active efforts everywhere can long avert so shocking a catastrophe.

Our present sufferings are not all. There is no foundation laid for any adequate relief hereafter. *All the magazines* provided in the States of New

Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, and all the immediate additional supplies they seem capable of affording, will not be sufficient to support the army more than a month longer, if so long. Very little has been done at the eastward, and as little to the southward; and whatever we have a right to expect from those quarters must necessarily be very remote, and is, indeed, more precarious than could be wished. When the before-mentioned supplies are exhausted, what a terrible crisis must ensue, unless all the energy of the continent shall be exerted to provide a timely remedy!

Impressed with this idea, I am, on my part, putting every engine at work that I can possibly think of to prevent the fatal consequences which we have so much reason to apprehend. I am calling upon all those whose stations and influence enable them to contribute their aid upon so important an occasion; and, from your well-known zeal, I expect everything within the compass of your power, and that the abilities and resources of the State over which you preside will admit.

To GOVERNOR GEORGE CLINTON, February 16, 1778.
5 *Sparks*, 239.

28. HIS COURTESY TO A CAPTIVE ENEMY.

OUR indulgent opinion of my character, and the polite terms in which you are pleased to express it, are peculiarly flattering; and I take pleasure in the opportunity you have afforded me of assuring you that, far from suffering the views of national opposition to be imbittered and debased by per-

sonal animosity, I am ever ready to do justice to the merit of the man and soldier, and to esteem where esteem is due, however the idea of a public enemy may interpose. You will not think it the language of unmeaning ceremony if I add that sentiments of personal respect, in the present instance, are reciprocal.

Viewing you in the light of an officer contending against what I conceive to be the rights of my country, the reverses of fortune you experienced in the field cannot be unacceptable to me; but, abstracted from considerations of national advantage, I can sincerely sympathize with your feelings as a soldier, the unavoidable difficulties of whose situation forbade his success; and as a man, whose lot combines the calamity of ill health, the anxieties of captivity, and the painful sensibility for a reputation exposed, where he most values it, to the assaults of malice and detraction.

As your aid-de-camp went directly to Congress, the business of your letter to me had been decided before it came to hand. I am happy that their cheerful acquiescence in your request prevented the necessity of my intervention.

To LIEUTENANT-GENERAL BURGOYNE, March 11, 1778.
5 Sparks, 266.

29. TO GET GOOD SERVICE, GOVERNMENTS MUST COMPENSATE IT JUSTLY.

THE difference between our service and that of the enemy is very striking. With *us*, from the peculiar, unhappy situation *of things*, the officer, a few instances ex-

cepted, must break in upon his private fortune for present support, without a prospect of future relief. With them, even companies are deemed so honorable and so valuable that they have sold of late from fifteen to twenty-two hundred pounds sterling; and I am credibly informed that four thousand guineas have been given for a troop of dragoons. You will readily determine how this difference will operate; what effects it must produce. Men may speculate as they will; they may talk of patriotism; they may draw a few examples from ancient story of great achievements performed by its influence; but whoever builds upon them as a sufficient basis for conducting a long and bloody war will find himself deceived in the end. We must take the passions of men as nature has given them, and those principles as a guide which are generally the rule of action. I do not mean to exclude altogether the idea of patriotism. I know it exists, and I know it has done much in the present contest. But I will venture to assert that a great and lasting war can never be supported on this principle alone. It must be aided by a prospect of interest, or some reward. For a time it may, of itself, push men to action, to bear much, to encounter difficulties; but it will not endure unassisted by interest.

To JOHN BANISTER, *Delegate in Congress*, April 21, 1778. 5 *Sparks*, 322.

30. PREJUDICE AGAINST THE ARMY UNFOUNDED.

AMONG individuals the most certain way to make a man your enemy is to tell him you esteem him such. So with public bodies; and the very jealousy which the narrow politics of some may affect to entertain of the army, in order to a due subordination to the supreme civil authority, is a likely means to produce a contrary effect; to incline it to the pursuit of those measures which they may wish to avoid. It is unjust, because no order of men in the Thirteen States has paid a more sacred regard to the proceedings of Congress than the army; for without arrogance or the smallest deviation from truth it may be said that no history now extant can furnish an instance of an army's suffering such uncommon hardships as ours has done, and bearing them with the same patience and fortitude. To see men without clothes to cover their nakedness, without blankets to lie on, without shoes (for the want of which their marches might be traced by the blood from their feet), and almost as often without provisions as with them, marching through the frost and snow, and at Christmas taking up their winter quarters within a day's march of the enemy, without a house or hut to cover them till they could be built, and submitting without a murmer, is a proof of patience and obedience which in my opinion can scarce be paralleled.

To the same, same date. 5 *Sparks*, 329.

31. THANKSGIVING FOR THE ALLIANCE WITH FRANCE.

IT having pleased the Almighty Ruler of the Universe to defend the cause of the United American States, and finally to raise us up a powerful friend among the princes of the earth, to establish our liberty and independency upon a lasting foundation; it becomes us to set apart a day for gratefully acknowledging the Divine goodness and celebrating the important event which we owe to his Divine interposition. The several brigades are to be assembled for this purpose at nine o'clock to-morrow morning, when their chaplains will communicate the intelligence contained in the Postscript of the Pennsylvania Gazette of the 2d instant, and offer up thanksgiving, and deliver a discourse suitable to the occasion. At half after ten o'clock a cannon will be fired, which is to be a signal for the men to be under arms; the brigade inspectors will then inspect their dress and arms and form the battalions according to the instructions given them, and announce to the commanding officers of the brigade that the battalions are formed.

The commanders of brigades will then appoint field-officers to the battalions, after which each battalion will be ordered to load and ground their arms. At half past eleven a second cannon will be fired as a signal for the march, upon which the several brigades will begin their march by wheeling to the right of platoons, and proceed by the nearest way to the left of their ground by the

new position; this will be pointed out by the brigade inspectors. A third signal will then be given, on which there will be a discharge of thirteen cannon; after which a running fire of the infantry will begin on the right of Woodford's, and continue throughout the front line; it will then be taken upon the left of the second line and continue to the right. Upon a signal given, the whole army will huzza, *Long live the King of France!* the artillery then begins again and fires thirteen rounds; this will be succeeded by a second general discharge of the musketry in a running fire, and huzza, *Long live the friendly European Powers!* The last discharge of thirteen pieces of artillery will be given, followed by a general running fire, and huzza, *The American States!*

From the Orderly Book, May 6, 1778. 5 *Sparks*, 355.

32. HIS PATIENCE UNDER MISREPRESENTATION.

Y enemies take an ungenerous advantage of me. They know the delicacy of my situation, and that motives of policy deprive me of the defence I might otherwise make against their insidious attacks. They know I cannot combat their insinuations, however injurious, without disclosing secrets which it is of the utmost moment to conceal. But why should I expect to be exempt from censure, the unfailing lot of an elevated station? Merit and talents, with which I can have no pretensions of rivalship, have ever been subject to it. My heart tells me that *it has been* my unremitted aim to do the best that

cumstances would permit; yet I may have been
ry often mistaken in my judgment of the means,
d may in many instances deserve the imputation
error.

To HENRY LAURENS, January 31, 1778. 5 *Sparks*, 504.

HE CONSOLES LAFAYETTE FOR THE PUBLIC CENSURE OF THE FRENCH FLEET.

EVERYBODY, sir, who reasons will acknowledge the advantages which we have derived from the French fleet, and the zeal of the commander of it; but, in a
ıe and republican government, you cannot re-
ain the voice of the multitude. Every man will
eak as he thinks, or, more properly, without
inking, and consequently will judge of effects
thout attending to the causes. The censures
ıich have been levelled at the officers of the
ench fleet would more than probably have fallen
a much higher degree upon a fleet of our own,
we had one in the same situation. It is the
ture of man to be displeased with everything
ıt disappoints a favorite hope or flattering pro-
ɔt; and it is the folly of too many of them to
ıdemn without investigating circumstances.

To the MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, September 1, 1778. 6 *Sparks*, 49.

34. COLONEL AARON BURR OVER DELICATE.

OU, in my opinion, carry ideas of delicacy too far when you propose to drop your pay, while the recovery of your health necessarily requires your absence from the service. It is not customary, and it would be unjust.

To LIEUTENANT-COLONEL AARON BURR, October 26, 1778. 6 *Sparks*, 101.

35. HE WILL BE OBEYED.

AM sorry that any officer should be so far lost to all sense of honor and duty as to talk of resigning because he has not marched with the corps to which he belongs. I would have you inform any of those who talk at this rate that if they leave their post or command before they are regularly drawn off or relieved, or shall directly or indirectly cause any soldier to do the like, they shall be punished, as far as martial law will extend, without favor or mitigation. It is true that officers who conceive they are to go when and where they please are better out of the service than in it, but they will not be indulged under the present circumstances. The troops who have marched eastward are no more going into winter quarters than those at Bedford or Fredericksburg, and may as likely march back as forward. This is not said to quiet the clamors of those officers with you, but to show *that it is their* duty to attend to the command as-

signed them, and not to look to the duty others are performing, without knowing the principle or design of it.

To BRIGADIER-GENERAL SCOTT, October 27, 1778.
6 *Sparks*, 102.

36. WINTER CAMPAIGNS.

N general, winter campaigns are destructive to troops, and nothing but pressing necessity and the best state of preparation can justify them.

To MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER, November 20, 1778.
6 *Sparks*, 115.

37. WASHINGTON INTRODUCES LAFAYETTE TO FRANKLIN.

IR, — The Marquis de Lafayette, having served with distinction as Major-General in the army of the United States for two campaigns, has been determined, by the prospect of a European war, to return to his native country. It is with pleasure that I embrace the opportunity of introducing to your personal acquaintance a gentleman whose merit cannot have left him unknown to you by reputation. The generous motives which first induced him to cross the Atlantic; the tribute which he paid to gallantry at the Brandywine; his success in Jersey, before he had recovered from his wounds, in an affair where he commanded militia against British grenadiers; the brilliant retreat by which

he eluded a combined manœuvre of the whole British force in the last campaign; his services in the enterprise against Rhode Island, — are such proofs of his zeal, military ardor, and talents, as have endeared him to America, and must greatly recommend him to his prince. Coming with so many titles to claim your esteem, it were needless for any other purpose than to indulge my own feelings, to add that I have a very particular friendship for him.

To BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, *American Minister in France*, December 28, 1778. 6 *Sparks*, 149.

38. THE CONDUCT OF GENERAL GATES.

DISCOVERED very early in the war symptoms of coldness and constraint in General Gates's behavior to me. These increased as he rose into greater consequence; but we did not come to a direct breach till the beginning of last year. This was occasioned by a correspondence, which I thought made rather free with me, between Generals Gates and Conway, which accidentally came to my knowledge.

. . . . After this affair subsided, I made a point of treating General Gates with all the attention and cordiality in my power, as well from a sincere desire of harmony as from an unwillingness to give any cause of triumph to our enemies, from an appearance of dissension among ourselves. I can appeal to the whole army and to the world, whether I have not cautiously avoided every word or hint that could tend to disparage General Gates *in any way*. I am sorry his conduct to me has not

been equally generous, and that he is continually giving me fresh proofs of malevolence and opposition. It will not be doing him injustice to say that, besides the little, underhand intrigues which he is frequently practising, there has hardly been any great military question in which his advice has been asked that it has not been given in an equivocal and designing manner, apparently calculated to afford him an opportunity of censuring me on the failure of whatever measure might be adopted.

When I find that this gentleman does not scruple to take the most unfair advantages of me, I am under a necessity of explaining his conduct to justify my own. This, and the perfect confidence I have in you, have occasioned me to trouble you with so free a communication of the state of things between us. I shall still be as passive as a regard to my own character will permit.

To the PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS, *April* 14, 1779.
6 *Sparks*, 222.

39. HOW TO FIGHT INDIANS.

BEG leave to suggest, as general rules that ought to govern your operations, to make rather than receive attacks, attended with as much impetuosity, shouting, and noise as possible; and to make the troops act in as loose and dispersed a way as is consistent with a proper degree of government, concert, and mutual support. It should be previously impressed upon the minds of the men, whenever they

ave an opportunity, to rush on with the war-hoop and fixed bayonet. Nothing will disconcert and terrify the Indians more than this.

To MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN, May 31, 1779.
6 *Sparks*, 264.

40. UPON THE SLANDERS OF THE PERSON CALLED GENERAL CHARLES LEE.

THE motives which actuate this gentleman can better be accounted for by himself than by me. If he can produce a single instance in which I have mentioned his name, after his trial commenced, where it was in my power to avoid it, and, when it was not, where I have done it with the smallest degree of acrimony or disrespect, I will consent that the world shall view my character in as disreputable a light as he wishes to place it. What cause there is, then, for such a profusion of venom as he is emitting upon all occasions, unless by an act of public duty, in bringing him to trial at his own solicitation, I have disappointed him and raised his ire; or he conceives that, in proportion as he can darken the shades of my character, he illuminates his own; — whether these, I say, or motives still more hidden and dark govern him, I shall not undertake to decide; nor have I time to inquire into them at present.

If I had ever assumed the character of a military genius and an officer of experience; if, under these *false* colors, I had solicited the command I was *honored with*; or if, after my appointment, I had

presumptuously driven on, under the sole guidance of my own judgment and self-will, and misfortunes, the result of obstinacy and misconduct, not of necessity, had followed, I should have thought myself a proper subject for the lash, not only of his, but of the pen of every other writer, and a fit object for public resentment. But when it is well known that the command was in a manner forced upon me, that I accepted it with the utmost diffidence, from a consciousness that it required greater abilities and more experience than I possessed to conduct a great military machine, embarrassed as I knew ours must be by a variety of complex circumstances, being, as it were, but little more than a mere chaos; and when nothing more was promised on my part than has been most inviolably performed, — it is rather grating to pass over in silence charges which may impress the uninformed, though others know that these charges have neither reason nor truth to support them, and that a plain and simple narrative of facts would defeat all his assertions, notwithstanding they are made with an effrontery which few men do, and, for the honor of human nature, none ought to possess.

If this gentleman is envious of my station, and thinks I stand in his way to preferment, I can assure him, in most solemn terms, that the first wish of my soul is to return to that peaceful retirement and domestic ease and happiness from whence I came. To this end all my labors have been directed, and for this purpose have I been more than four years a perfect slave, endeavoring, under as many embarrassing circumstances as

ever fell to one man's lot to encounter, and with as pure motives as ever man was influenced by, to promote the cause and service I had embarked in.

To PRESIDENT REED, July 29, 1779. 6 *Sparks*, 310.

41. HE INVITES LADIES TO DINNER.

DEAR DOCTOR, — I have asked Mrs. Cochran and Mrs. Livingston to dine with me to-morrow; but am I not in honor bound to apprise them of their fare? As I hate deception, even where the imagination only is concerned, I will. It is needless to premise that my table is large enough to hold the ladies. Of this they had ocular proof yesterday. To say how it is usually covered is rather more essential; and this shall be the purport of my letter.

Since our arrival at this happy spot we have had a ham, sometimes a shoulder of bacon, to grace the head of the table; a piece of roast beef adorns the foot; and a dish of beans, or greens, almost imperceptible, decorates the centre. When the cook has a mind to cut a figure, which I presume will be the case to-morrow, we have two beefsteak pies or dishes of crabs in addition, one on each side of the centre dish, dividing the space, and reducing the distance between dish and dish to about six feet, which without them would be near twelve feet apart. Of late he has had the surprising sagacity to discover that apples will make pies; and it is a question if, in the violence of his efforts, we do not *get one of apples*, instead of having both of beef-

steaks. If the ladies can put up with such entertainment, and will submit to partake of it on plates once tin but now iron (not become so by the labor of scouring), I shall be happy to see them.

To DOCTOR JOHN COCHRAN, *Surgeon-General*, August 16, 1779. 6 *Sparks*, 319.

42. COIN DEBTS HE WILL NOT RECEIVE IN DEPRECIATED PAPER.

HAVE considered the matter in every point of view in which my judgment enables me to place it, and am resolved to receive no more old debts (such, I mean, as were contracted and ought to have been paid before the war) at the present nominal value of the money, unless compelled to do it, or it is the practice of others to do it. Neither justice, reason, nor policy requires it. The law undoubtedly was well designed. It was intended to stamp a value upon, and to give a free circulation to, the paper bills of credit; but it never was, nor could have been, intended to make a man take a shilling or sixpence in the pound for a just debt, which his debtor is well able to pay, and thereby involve himself in ruin. I am as willing now as I ever was to take paper money for every kind of debt, and at its present depreciated value for those debts which have been contracted since the money became so; but I will not in future receive the nominal sum for such old debts as come under the above description, except as before specified.

The fear of injuring, by any example of mine, the credit of our paper currency, if I attempted to discriminate between the real and nominal value of paper money, has already sunk for me a large sum.

To LUND WASHINGTON, August 17, 1779. 6 *Sparks*, 321.

43. HIS REGARD FOR LAFAYETTE.

OUR forward zeal in the cause of liberty; your singular attachment to this infant world; your ardent and persevering efforts, not only in America, but since your return to France, to serve the United States; your polite attention to Americans, and your strict and uniform friendship for *me*, — have ripened the first impressions of esteem and attachment which I imbibed for you, into such perfect love and gratitude as neither time nor absence can impair. This will warrant my assuring you that, whether in the character of an officer at the head of a corps of gallant Frenchmen, if circumstances should require this, whether as a major-general commanding a division of the American army, or whether, after our swords and spears have given place to the ploughshare and pruning-hook, I see you as a private gentleman, a friend and companion, I shall welcome you with all the warmth of friendship to Columbia's shores; and, in the latter case, to my rural cottage, where homely fare and a cordial reception shall be substituted for delicacies and costly living. This, from past experience, I know *you can submit* to; and if the lovely partner of

your happiness will consent to participate with *us* in such rural entertainments and amusements, I can undertake, in behalf of Mrs. Washington, that she will do everything in her power to make Virginia agreeable to the Marchioness. My inclination and endeavors to do this cannot be doubted, when I assure you that I love everybody that is dear to you, and consequently participate in the pleasure you feel in the prospect of again becoming a parent, and do most sincerely congratulate you and your lady on this fresh pledge she is about to give you of her love.

To the MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, *Paris*, September 30, 1779. 6 *Sparks*, 362.

44. UNCOMFORTABLE HEAD-QUARTERS.

HAVE been at my present quarters since the first day of December, and have not a kitchen to cook a dinner in, although the logs have been put together some considerable time by my own guard. Nor is there a place at this moment in which a servant can lodge with the smallest degree of comfort. Eighteen belonging to my family, and all Mrs. Ford's, are crowded together in her kitchen, and scarce one of them able to speak for the colds they have caught.

I have repeatedly taken notice of this inconveniency to Major Gibbs, and have as often been told that boards were not to be had. I acquiesced, and believe you will do me the justice to acknowledge that it never has been my practice to involve

the public in any expense which I could possibly avoid, or derive benefits which would be inconvenient or prejudicial to others. To share the common lot, and participate the inconveniences which the army, from the peculiarity of our circumstances, are obliged to undergo, has with me been a fundamental principle; and, while I conceived this to be the case universally, I was perfectly content. That it is not so, I appeal to your own observation; though I never intended to make the remark, nor should I have done it but for the question which involuntarily drew from me the answer, which has become the subject of your letter.

Equally opposed is it to my wishes and expectation that you should be troubled in matters respecting my accommodation, further than to give the necessary orders and furnish materials, without which orders are nugatory. From what you have said, I am fully satisfied that the persons to whom you intrusted the execution of the business are alone to blame; for certain I am, they might by attention have obtained, equally with others, as many boards as would have answered my purposes long ere this. Far, very far is it from me to censure any measure you have adopted for your own accommodation, or for the more immediate convenience of Mrs. Greene. At all times I think you are entitled to as good as circumstances will afford, and, in the present condition of your lady, I conceive that no delay could be admitted. I should therefore with great willingness have made my *convenience* yield to hers, if the point had lain there.

To MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE, January 22, 1780.
6 Sparks, 449.

45. WASHINGTON TO THE DAUGHTER OF DR. FRANKLIN.

EAR MADAM, — I should have done myself the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of the letter you did me the favor to write on the 26th of December, at the moment of receipt, had not some affairs of a very unusual nature, which are too recent and notorious to require explanation, engaged my whole attention. I pray you now to be persuaded that a sense of the patriotic exertions of yourself and the ladies who have furnished so handsome and useful a gratuity for the army, at so critical and severe a season, will not easily be effaced, and that the value of the donation will be greatly enhanced by a consideration of the hands by which it was made and presented.

Amidst all the distresses and sufferings of the army, from whatever sources they have arisen, it must be a consolation to our virtuous countrywomen that they have never been accused of withholding their most zealous efforts to support the cause we are engaged in, and encourage those who are defending them in the field. The army do not want gratitude, nor do they misplace it in this instance.

Although the friendship of your father may oblige him to see some things through too partial a medium, yet the indulgent manner in which he is pleased to express himself respecting me is indeed very gratifying; for nothing in human life can afford a liberal mind more rational and exquisite

satisfaction than the approbation of a wise, a great, and virtuous man. Mrs. Washington requests me to present her compliments to Mr. Bache and yourself, with which you will be pleased to accept of mine.

To MRS. SARAH BACHE, January 15, 1781.—7 *Sparks*, 375.

46. PRISONERS MUST BE EXCHANGED IN THE ORDER OF THEIR CAPTURE.

HAVE received your favor announcing your promotion, and soliciting my influence in obtaining your exchange. I desire you to be persuaded that I rejoice in your prosperity and wish you an increase of well-merited honors and felicities; but at the same time I cannot conceive how the private concerns of any individual should be preferred to the public good, or that general rules, established for the benefit of all those unfortunate men whom the fortune of war has placed in the power of the enemy, should be dispensed with on ordinary occasions.

Priority of capture has been an invariable principle in making those exchanges which have been negotiated under my immediate direction; and I see no reason for departing from so equitable a rule. The inconveniences I foresee would be innumerable. The danger of partiality would alone be a sufficient objection. Besides this, from the number of letters I have received from you since your captivity, you must be sensible, sir, that were a door opened for all our officers who are prisoners to expect partial exchanges would be

made for them, my whole time and attention must be devoted to their applications. In fine, sir, I cannot interfere in the matter without violating an express resolution of Congress, counteracting my own sentiments, introducing a new system, and doing the most palpable injustice.

To LIEUTENANT-COLONEL DURUYSEN, February 1, 1781. 7 *Sparks*, 393.

47. GRADATION OF PUNISHMENTS.

THE highest corporal punishment we are allowed to give is a hundred lashes; between that and death there is no medium. As instances daily occur of offences for which the former is altogether inadequate, courts-martial, in order to preserve some proportion between the crime and the punishment, are obliged to pronounce sentence of death. Capital sentences on this account become more frequent in our service than in any other; so frequent as to render their execution in most cases inexpedient. And it happens from this that the greater offences often escape punishment, while the less are commonly punished; which cannot but operate as an encouragement to the commission of the former.

The inconveniences of this defect are obvious. Congress are sensible of the necessity of punishment in an army, of the justice and policy of a due proportion between the crime and the penalties, and, of course, of the necessity of proper degrees in the latter. I shall therefore content myself with observing that it appears to me indispensable

that there should be an extension of the present corporal punishment, and that it would be useful to authorize courts-martial to sentence delinquents to labor on public works; perhaps even for some crimes, particularly desertion, to transfer them from the land to the sea service, where they have less opportunity to indulge their inconstancy. A variety in punishment is of utility, as well as a proportion. The number of lashes may either be indefinite, left to the discretion of the court, or limited to a larger number. In this case I would recommend five hundred.

To the PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS, February 3, 1781.
7 *Sparks*, 395.

48. CORRUPT DEALING WITH THE ENEMY IN NEW YORK.

THE traffic with New York is immense. Individual States will not make it felony, lest, among other reasons, it should not become general; and nothing short of it will ever check, much less stop, a practice which, at the same time that it serves to drain us of our provision and specie, removes the barrier between us and the enemy, corrupts the morals of our people by a lucrative traffic, weakens by degrees the opposition, and affords a means for obtaining regular and perfect intelligence of everything among us, while even in this respect we derive no benefit from a fear of discovery. Men of all descriptions are now indiscriminately engaging in it, Whig, *Tory, speculator*. On account of its being followed

by those of the latter class, in a manner with impunity, men who two or three years ago would have shuddered at the idea of such connections, now pursue it with avidity, and reconcile it to themselves (in which their profits plead powerfully) upon a principle of equality with the Tory, who, knowing that a forfeiture of the goods to the informer is all he has to dread, and that this is to be eluded by an agreement not to inform against each other, goes into the measure without risk.

To JOHN SULLIVAN, *in Congress*, February 4, 1781. 7 *Sparks*, 499.

49. HE WOULD HAVE HAD HIS HOUSE BURNED, RATHER THAN SUPPLY THE ENEMY WITH PROVISIONS.

DEAR LUND, — I am very sorry to hear of your loss. I am a little sorry to hear of my own; but that which gives me most concern is that you should go on board the enemy's vessels and furnish them with refreshments. It would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard that in consequence of your non-compliance with their request, they had burnt my house and laid the plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy, and making a voluntary offer of refreshments to them with a view to prevent a conflagration.

It was not in your power, I acknowledge, to prevent them from sending a flag on shore, and you did

right to meet it; but you should, in the same instant that the business of it was unfolded, have declared explicitly that it was improper for you to yield to the request; after which, if they had proceeded to help themselves by force, you could but have submitted; and, being unprovided for defence, this was to be preferred to a feeble opposition, which only serves as a pretext to burn and destroy.

I am thoroughly persuaded that you acted from your best judgment, and believe that your desire to preserve my property and rescue the buildings from impending danger was your governing motive; but to go on board their vessels, carry them refreshments, commune with a parcel of plundering scoundrels, and request a favor by asking a surrender of my negroes, was exceedingly ill-judged, and, it is to be feared, will be unhappy in its consequences, as it will be a precedent for others, and may become a subject of animadversion.

I have no doubt of the enemy's intention to prosecute the plundering plan they have begun; and unless a stop can be put to it, by the arrival of a superior naval force, I have as little doubt of its ending in the loss of all my negroes, and in the destruction of my houses. But I am prepared for the event; under the prospect of which, if you could deposit in a place of safety the most valuable and least bulky articles, it might be consistent with policy and prudence, and a means of preserving them hereafter. Such and so many things as *are necessary* for common and present use must be

retained, and must run their chance through the fiery trial of this summer.

To LUND WASHINGTON, *at Mount Vernon*, April 30, 1781.
8 *Sparks*, 31.

50. RETALIATION.

THE enemy, persisting in that barbarous line of conduct which they have pursued during the course of this war, have lately most inhumanly executed Captain Joshua Huddy, of the Jersey State troops, taken prisoner by them at a post on Tom's River; and in consequence I have written to the British commander-in-chief that, unless the perpetrators of that horrid deed were delivered up, I should be under the disagreeable necessity of retaliating, as the only means left to put a stop to such inhuman proceedings.

You will, therefore, immediately on receipt of this, designate by lot for the above purpose a British captain, who is an unconditional prisoner, if such a one is in your possession; if not, a lieutenant under the same circumstances from among the prisoners at any of the posts, either in Pennsylvania or Maryland. So soon as you have fixed on the person, you will send him under a safeguard to Philadelphia, where the Minister of War will order a proper guard to receive and conduct him to the place of his destination.

For your information respecting the officers who are prisoners in our possession, I have ordered the commissary of prisoners to furnish you with a list of them. It will be forwarded with this. I need not

mention to you that every possible tenderness that is consistent with the security of him should be shown to the person whose unfortunate lot it may be to suffer.

To BRIGADIER-GENERAL HAZEN, May 3, 1782.
8 *Sparks*, 280.

51. TO THE OFFICER SELECTED, ON HIS RELEASE.

SIR, — It affords me singular pleasure to have it in my power to transmit to you the enclosed copy of an act of Congress, of the 7th instant, by which you are released from the disagreeable circumstances in which you have so long been. Supposing that you would wish to go into New York as soon as possible, I also enclose a passport for that purpose.

Your letter of the 18th of October came regularly to my hands. I beg you to believe that my not answering it sooner did not proceed from inattention to you, or a want of feeling for your situation. I daily expected a determination of your case, and I thought it better to await that, than to feed you with hopes that might, in the end, prove fruitless. You will attribute my detention of the enclosed letters, which have been in my hands about a fortnight, to the same cause.

I cannot take leave of you, sir, without assuring you that, in whatever light my agency in this unpleasing affair may be viewed, I was never influenced, through the whole of it, by sanguinary motives, but by what I conceived to be a sense *of my duty,* which loudly called upon me to take

easures, however disagreeable, to prevent a repe-
ition of those enormities which have been the
ubject of discussion. And that this important
nd is likely to be answered without the effusion
f the blood of an innocent person is not a greater
elief to you than it is to, sir, your most obedient
nd humble servant.

To CAPTAIN CHARLES ASGILL, November 13, 1782.
8 *Sparks*, 362.

2. ADVICE TO A NEPHEW ON HIS BEGINNING THE STUDY OF LAW.

ET the object which carried you to Phila-
delphia be always before your eyes. Re-
member that it is not the mere study of
the law, but to become eminent in the
rofession of it, that is, to yield honor and profit.
'he first was your choice; let the second be your
mbition. Dissipation is incompatible with both;
he company in which you will improve most will
e least expensive to you; and yet I am not such
stoic as to suppose that you will, or to think it
ight that you should, always be in company with
enators and philosophers; but of the juvenile kind
et me advise you to be choice. It is easy to make
cquaintances, but very difficult to shake them off,
owever irksome and unprofitable they are found,
fter we have once committed ourselves to them.
'he indiscretions which very often they involunta-
ily lead one into prove equally distressing and dis-
raceful.

Be courteous to all, but intimate with few; and

let those few be well tried before you give them your confidence. True friendship is a plant of slow growth, and must undergo and withstand the shocks of adversity before it is entitled to the appellation.

Let your heart feel for the afflictions and distresses of every one, and let your hand give in proportion to your purse; remembering always the estimation of the widow's mite, but that it is not every one who asketh that deserveth charity; all, however, are worthy of the inquiry, or the deserving may suffer.

Do not conceive that fine clothes make fine men, any more than fine feathers make fine birds. A plain, genteel dress is more admired and obtains more credit than lace and embroidery, in the eyes of the judicious and sensible.

The last thing which I shall mention is first in importance; and that is, to avoid gaming. This is a vice which is productive of every possible evil; equally injurious to the morals and health of its votaries. It is the child of avarice, the brother of iniquity, and the father of mischief. It has been the ruin of many worthy families, the loss of many a man's honor, and the cause of suicide. To all those who enter the lists, it is equally fascinating. The successful gamester pushes his good fortune till it is overtaken by a reverse. The losing gamester, in hopes of retrieving past misfortunes, goes on from bad to worse, till, grown desperate he pushes at everything and loses his all. In word, few gain by this abominable practice, whi *thousands* are injured.

Perhaps you will say, "My conduct has anticipated the advice," and "Not one of the cases applies to me." I shall be heartily glad of it. It will add not a little to my happiness to find those to whom I am so nearly connected pursuing the right walk of life. It will be the sure road to my favor and to those honors and places of profit which their country can bestow, as merit rarely goes unrewarded.

To BUSHROD WASHINGTON, January 15, 1783. 8 *Sparks*, 373.

53. NECESSITY OF A CLOSER UNION OF THE STATES.

REJOICE most exceedingly that there is an end to our warfare, and that such a field is opening to our view as will, with wisdom to direct the cultivation of it, make us a great, a respectable, and happy people; but it must be improved by other means than State politics, and unreasonable jealousies and prejudices, or it requires not the second-sight to see that we shall be instruments in the hands of our enemies, and those European powers who may be jealous of our greatness in union, to dissolve the confederation. But, to obtain this, although the way seems extremely plain, is not so easy.

My wish to see the union of these States established upon liberal and permanent principles, and inclination to contribute my mite in pointing out the defects of the present constitution, are equally great. All my private letters have teemed with these sentiments, and, whenever this topic has been the subject of conversation, I have endeavored to

diffuse and enforce them; but how far any further essay by me might be productive of the wished-for end, or appear to arrogate more than belongs to me, depends so much upon popular opinion, and the temper and dispositions of the people, that it is not easy to decide. I shall be obliged to you, however, for the thoughts which you have promised me on this subject, and as soon as you can make it convenient.

No man in the United States is or can be more deeply impressed with the necessity of a reform in our present confederation than myself. No man, perhaps, has felt the bad effects of it more sensibly; for to the defects thereof, and want of power in Congress, may justly be ascribed the prolongation of the war, and consequently the expenses occasioned by it. More than half the perplexities I have experienced in the course of my command, and almost the whole of the difficulties and distress of the army, have had their origin here.

To ALEXANDER HAMILTON, *in Congress*, March 31, 1783. 8 *Sparks*, 409.

54. A NEW CONSTITUTION NEEDED.

E are now an independent people, and have yet to learn political tactics. We are placed among the nations of the earth, and have a character to establish; but how we shall acquit ourselves, time must discover. The probability is (at least I fear it), that local or *State* politics will interfere too much with the *more liberal* and extensive plan of government

which wisdom and foresight, freed from the mist of prejudice, would dictate; and that we shall be guilty of many blunders in treading this boundless theatre, before we shall have arrived at any perfection in this art; in a word, that the experience which is purchased at the price of difficulties and distress will alone convince us that the honor, power, and true interest of this country must be measured by a Continental scale, and that every departure therefrom weakens the Union, and may ultimately break the band which holds us together. To avert these evils, to form a new constitution that will give consistency, stability, and dignity to the Union, and sufficient power to the great council of the nation for general purposes, is a duty incumbent upon every man who wishes well to his country, and will meet with my aid as far as can be rendered in the private walks of life.

To the MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, April 5, 1783.
8 *Sparks*, 412.

55. THE ESSENTIALS TO THE WELL-BEING OF THE UNITED STATES.

HERE are four things which, I humbly conceive, are essential to the well-being, I may even venture to say, to the existence, of the United States as an independent power.

First, An indissoluble union of the States under one federal head.

Second, A sacred regard to public justice.

Third, The adoption of a proper peace establishment; and,

Fourth, The prevalence of that pacific and friendly disposition among the people of the United States which will induce them to forget their local prejudices and policies; to make those mutual concessions which are requisite to the general prosperity; and, in some instances, to sacrifice their individual advantages to the interest of the community.

These are the pillars on which the glorious fabric of our independency and national character must be supported. Liberty is the basis; and whoever would dare to sap the foundation, or overturn the structure, under whatever specious pretext he may attempt it, will merit the bitterest execration, and the severest punishment, which can be inflicted by his injured country.

Circular Letter to the Governors of all the States on disbanding the Army, June 8, 1783. 8 *Sparks*, 442.

56. HIS MOST SOLEMN INJUNCTION ON BIDDING FAREWELL TO THE ARMY.

LTHOUGH the General has so frequently given it as his opinion in the most public and explicit manner, that, unless the principles of the Federal Government were properly supported, and the powers of the Union increased, the honor, dignity, and justice of the nation would be lost forever; yet he cannot help repeating, on this occasion, so interesting a sentiment, and leaving it as his last injunction to every officer and every soldier who may view the subject in the same serious point of light, to add *his best* endeavors to those of his worthy fellow-

citizens, towards effecting these great and valuable purposes, on which our very existence as a nation so materially depends.

Farewell Address to the Armies of the United States, November 2, 1783. 8 *Sparks*, 495.

67. HIS REASONS FOR CHARGING CONGRESS WITH THE EXPENSE OF MRS. WASHINGTON'S VISITING HEAD-QUARTERS.

ALTHOUGH I kept memoranda of these expenditures, I did not introduce them into my public accounts as they occurred. The reason was, it appeared at first view in the commencement of them to have the complexion of a private charge. I had my doubts, therefore, of the propriety of making it. But, as the peculiar circumstances attending my command, and the embarrassed situation of our public affairs obliged me (to the no small detriment of my private interest) to postpone the visit I every year contemplated to make my family between the close of one campaign and the opening of another; and as this expense was incidental thereto, and consequent of my self-denial, I have, as of right I think I ought, with due consideration, adjudged the charge as just with respect to the public, as it is convenient with respect to myself.

And I make it with the less reluctance as I find, upon the final adjustment of these accounts (which have, as will appear, been long unsettled), that I am a considerable loser; my disbursements falling a good deal short of my receipts and the money I had upon hand of my own.

Financial Statement, July 1, 1783. 8 Sparks, 511.

58. ADDRESS TO CONGRESS ON RESIGNING HIS COMMISSION.

MR. PRESIDENT, — The great events on which my resignation depended having at length taken place, I have now the honor of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress, and of presenting myself before them to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country.

Happy in the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty, and pleased with the opportunity afforded the United States of becoming a respectable nation, I resign, with satisfaction, the appointment I accepted with diffidence; a diffidence in my abilities to accomplish so arduous a task, which, however, was superseded by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause, the support of the supreme power of the Union, and the patronage of Heaven.

The successful termination of the war has verified the most sanguine expectations; and my gratitude for the interposition of Providence, and the assistance I have received from my countrymen, increases with every review of the momentous contest.

While I repeat my obligations to the army in general, I should do injustice to my own feelings not to acknowledge, in this place, the peculiar services and distinguished merits of the gentlemen who have been attached to my person during the war. It was impossible that the choice of confidential officers to compose my family should have

been more fortunate. Permit me, sir, to recommend in particular those who have continued in service to the present moment as worthy of the favorable notice and patronage of Congress.

I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them to his holy keeping.

Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action; and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life.

December 23, 1783. 8 *Sparks*, 504.

IN RETIREMENT AFTER THE REVOLUTION.

IN RETIREMENT AFTER THE REVOLUTION.

1. HIS CONSIDERATION FOR HIS AIDS.

EQUALLY unexpected by them, as it appeared just in my eye to do it, I have given my aids, who attended me from the seat of my military command, one hundred dollars each to bear their expenses home. I could not think it reasonable that, from their attachment to me, or from motives of etiquette, they should incur this charge themselves. Their finances, I well knew, were unable to bear it, although I had some difficulty to prevail on them to accept this aid. Cobb I would not suffer (on account of his domestic and other concerns) to proceed any further than Philadelphia with me, but his distance from thence home would be equal to that of the other gentlemen from this place. All stand, therefore, upon an equal footing in my allowance.

To the SUPERINTENDENT OF FINANCES, January 4, 1784.
9 *Sparks*. 3.

2. A WEAK GOVERNMENT MORE DANGEROUS THAN A STRONG ONE.

BELIEVE all things will come right at last, but like a young heir, come a little prematurely to a large inheritance, we shall wanton and run riot until we have brought our reputation to the brink of ruin, and then like him shall have to labor with the current of opinion, when compelled perhaps to do what prudence and common policy pointed out, as plain as any problem in Euclid, in the first instance.

The disinclination of the individual States to yield competent powers to Congress for the federal government, their unreasonable jealousy of that body and of one another, and the disposition which seems to pervade each of being all-wise and all-powerful within itself, will, if there is not a change in the system, be our downfall as a nation.

For my own part, although I am returned to, and am now mingled with, the class of private citizens, and like them must suffer all the evils of a tyranny, or of too great an extension of federal powers, I have no fears arising from this source in my mind; but I have many, and powerful ones indeed, which predict the worst consequences from a half-starved, limping government that appears to be always moving upon crutches, and tottering at every step.

To BENJAMIN HARRISON, *Governor of Virginia*, January 18, 1784. 9 *Sparks*, 11.

3. ONE OF HIS JESTS.

IF my commission is not necessary for the files of Congress, I should be glad to have it deposited among my own papers. It may serve *my grandchildren*, some fifty or hundred years hence, for a theme to ruminate on, if *they* should be contemplatively disposed.

To CHARLES THOMSON, *Secretary of Congress*, January 22, 1784. 9 *Sparks*, 16.

4. HIS HAPPINESS IN RETIREMENT.

I AM become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac; and under the shadow of my own vine and my own fig-tree, free from the bustle of a camp and busy scenes of public life, I am solacing myself h those tranquil enjoyments of which the sol-r, who is ever in pursuit of fame, the statesman, ose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent devising schemes to promote the welfare of his n, perhaps the ruin of other countries, as if this be was insufficient for us all, and the courtier, o is always watching the countenance of his nce, in hopes of catching a gracious smile, can ve very little conception. I have not only re-d from all public employments, but I am retir- within myself, and shall be able to view the tary walk, and tread the paths of private life, h a heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am ermined to be pleased with all; and this, my

dear friend, being the order for my march, I will move gently down the stream of life, until I sleep with my fathers.

To the MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, February 1, 1784.
9 *Sparks*, 17.

5. THE SAME SUBJECT.

AM just beginning to experience that ease and freedom from public cares, which, however desirable, takes some time to realize; for, strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true that it was not till lately I could get the better of my usual custom of ruminating, as soon as I waked in the morning, on the business of the ensuing day; and of my surprise at finding, after revolving many things in my mind, that I was no longer a public man, nor had anything to do with public transactions.

I feel now, however, as I conceive a wearied traveller must do, who, after treading many a painful step with a weary burthen on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the haven to which all the former were directed; and from his house-top is looking back and tracing with an eager eye the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay in his way; and into which none but the all-powerful Guide and Dispenser of human events could have prevented his falling.

To MAJOR-GENERAL KNOX, February 20, 1784.
9 *Sparks*, 19.

6. HE IS THE FOUNDER OF OUR SYSTEM OF PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS, AND HE PREDICTS THE ERIE CANAL.

MY opinion coincides perfectly with yours respecting the practicability of an easy and short communication between the waters of the Ohio and Potomac. . . . . I am not so disinterested in this matter as you are; but I am made very happy to find that a man of discernment and liberality, who has no particular interest in the plan, thinks as I do, who have lands in that country, the value of which would be enhanced by the adoption of such a measure.

More than ten years ago I was struck with the importance of it; and, despairing of any aid from the public, I became a principal mover of a bill to empower a number of subscribers to undertake at their own expense, on conditions which were expressed, the extension of the navigation from tide-water to Will's Creek, about one hundred and fifty miles; and I devoutly wish that this may not be the only expedient by which it can be effected now. To get this business in motion, I was obliged even upon that ground to comprehend James River, in order to remove the jealousies which arose from the attempt to extend the navigation of the Potomac. The plan, however, was in a tolerably good train when I set out for Cambridge in 1775, and would have been in an excellent way had it not been for the difficulties which were met with in the Maryland Assembly from the

opposition which was given (according to report) by the Baltimore merchants, who were alarmed, and perhaps not without cause, at the consequence of water transportation to Georgetown of the produce which usually came to their market by land.

The local interest of that place, joined to the short-sighted politics or contracted views of another part of that Assembly, gave Mr. Thomas Johnson, who was a warm promoter of the scheme on the north side of the Potomac, a great deal of trouble. In this situation I left things when I took command of the army. The war afterwards called men's attention to different objects, and all the money they could or would raise was applied to other purposes. But with you, I am satisfied that not a moment ought to be lost in recommencing this business, as I know *the Yorkers will delay no time to remove every obstacle in the way of the other communication, so soon as the posts of Oswego and Niagara are surrendered;* and I shall be mistaken if they do not build vessels for the navigation of the lakes, which will supersede the necessity of coasting on either hand.

To THOMAS JEFFERSON, *in Congress*, March 29, 1784.
9 *Sparks*, 30.

7. HE INVITES MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

OU have youth (and, if you should not incline to bring your children, can leave them with all the advantages of education), and must have a curiosity to see *the country*, young, rude, and uncultivated as it

is, for the liberties of which your husband has fought, bled, and acquired much glory, where everybody admires, everybody loves him. Come, then, let me entreat you, and call my cottage your home; for your own doors do not open to you with more readiness than mine would. You will see the plain manner in which we live, and meet with rustic civility; and you shall taste the simplicity of rural life. It will diversify the scene, and may give you a higher relish for the gayeties of the court when you return to Versailles. In these wishes, and in most respectful compliments, Mrs. Washington joins me.

To the MARCHIONESS DE LAFAYETTE, April 14, 1784.
9 *Sparks*, 39.

8. HE BEFRIENDS THOMAS PAINE.

CAN nothing be done in our Assembly for poor Paine? Must the merits and service of *Common Sense* continue to glide down the stream of time unrewarded by this country? His writings certainly have had a powerful effect upon the public mind. Ought they not, then, to meet an adequate return? He is poor, he is chagrined, and almost, if not altogether, in despair of relief. New York, not the least distressed nor best able State in the Union, has done something for him. This kind of provision he prefers to an allowance from Congress. He has reasons for it which to him are conclusive, and such, I think, as may be approved by others. His views are moderate; a decent independency is, I believe,

all he aims at. Ought he to be disappointed of this? If you think otherwise, I am sure you will not only move the matter, but give it your support. For me it only remains to feel for his situation.

To JAMES MADISON, June 12, 1784. 9 *Sparks*, 49.

9. A NOTE TO LAFAYETTE'S LITTLE DAUGHTER.

PERMIT me to thank my dear little correspondent for the favor of her letter of the 18th of June last, and to impress her with the idea of the pleasure I shall derive from a continuance of them. Her papa is restored to her with all the good health, paternal affection, and honors which her tender heart could wish. He will carry a kiss to her from me (which might be more agreeable from a pretty boy), and give her assurances of the affectionate regard with which I have the pleasure of being her well-wisher.

November 25, 1784. 9 *Sparks*, 74.

10. HE AGAIN PREDICTS THE ERIE CANAL.

IT has long been my decided opinion that the shortest, easiest, and least expensive communication with the invaluable and extensive country back of us would be by one or both of the rivers of Virginia which have their sources in the Appalachian Mountains. Nor am I singular in this opinion. Evans, in his Map and Analysis of the Middle Colonies, which, considering the early period at which they were given *to the public,* are done with amazing exactness,

and Hutchins since, in his Topographical Description of the western country, a good part of which is from actual surveys, are decidedly of the same sentiments; as indeed are all others who have had opportunities, and have been at the pains, to investigate and consider the subject.

But that this may not now stand as mere matter of opinion and assertion, unsupported by facts (such at least as the best maps now extant, compared with the oral testimony which my opportunities in the course of the war have enabled me to obtain), I shall give you the different routes and distances from Detroit, by which all the trade of the northwestern parts of the united territory must pass; unless the Spaniards, contrary to their present policy, should engage part of it, or the British should attempt to force nature by carrying the trade of the Upper Lakes by the river Utawas into Canada, which I scarcely think they will or could effect. Taking Detroit, then, (which is putting ourselves in as unfavorable a point of view as we can be well placed in, because it is upon the line of the British territory,) as a point by which, as I have already observed, all that part of the trade must come, it appears from the statement enclosed, that the tide-waters of this State are nearer to it by one hundred and sixty-eight miles than those of the River St. Lawrence, or than those of the Hudson at Albany by one hundred and seventy-six miles.

Maryland stands upon similar ground with Virginia. Pennsylvania, although the Susquehanna is an unfriendly water, much impeded, it is said, with rocks and rapids, and nowhere communicat-

ing with those which lead to her capital, has it in contemplation to open a communication between Toby's Creek, which empties into the Alleghany River ninety-five miles above Fort Pitt, and the west branch of the Susquehanna, and to cut a canal between the waters of the latter and the Schuykill; the expense of which is easier to be conceived, than estimated or described by me. A people, however, who are possessed of the spirit of commerce, who see and who will pursue their advantages, may achieve almost anything. In the mean time, under the uncertainty of these undertakings, they are smoothing the roads and paving the ways for the trade of that western world. That New York will do the same as soon as the British garrisons are removed, which are at present insurmountable obstacles in their way, no person who knows the temper, genius, and policy of those people as well as I do can harbor the smallest doubt.

To BENJAMIN HARRISON, *Governor of Virginia*, October 10, 1784. 9 *Sparks*, 59.

11. HIS CORDIAL AFFECTION FOR LAFAYETTE.

N the moment of our separation, upon the road as I travelled, and every hour since, I have felt all that love, respect, and attachment for you with which length of years, close connection, and your merits have inspired me. I often asked myself, as our carriages separated, whether that was the last sight I ever should have of you? And though I wished to say No, my fears answered Yes. I called to

mind the days of my youth, and found they had long since fled to return no more; that I was now descending the hill I had been fifty-two years climbing, and that, though I was blest with a good constitution, I was of a short-lived family, and might soon expect to be entombed in the mansion of my fathers. These thoughts darkened the the shades and gave a gloom to the picture, and, consequently, to my prospect of seeing you again. But I will not repine; I have had my day.

Nothing of importance has transpired since I parted with you. I found my family well, and am now immersed in company; notwithstanding which, I have in haste produced a few more letters to give you the trouble of, rather inclining to commit them to your care than to pass them through many and unknown hands.

It is unnecessary, I persuade myself, to repeat to you, my dear Marquis, the sincerity of my regards and friendship; nor have I words which could express my affection for you, were I to attempt it. My fervent prayers are offered for your safe and pleasant passage, happy meeting with Madame de Lafayette and family, and the completion of every wish of your heart; in all which Mrs. Washington joins me.

To the MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, December 8, 1784.
9 *Sparks*, 77.

12. UPON RECEIVING A VALUABLE GIFT FROM VIRGINIA.

THE attention and good wishes which the Assembly have evidenced by their act for vesting in me one hundred and fifty shares in the navigation of the rivers Potomac and James are more than mere compliment. There is an unequivocal and substantial meaning annexed. But believe me, sir, notwithstanding this, no circumstance has happened to me, since I left the walks of public life, which has so much embarrassed me.

On the one hand, I consider this act, as I have already observed, as a noble and unequivocal proof of the good opinion, the affection, and disposition of my country to serve me; and I should be hurt if, by declining the acceptance of it, my refusal should be construed into disrespect, or the smallest slight upon the generous intention of the country, or it should be thought that an ostentatious display of disinterestedness or public virtue was the source of refusal. On the other hand, it is really my wish to have my mind, and my actions, which are the result of reflection, as free and independent as the air; that I may be more at liberty (in things which my opportunities and experience have brought me to the knowledge of) to express my sentiments, and, if necessary, to suggest what may occur to me under the fullest conviction that, although my judgment may be arraigned, there may be no suspicion that sinister motives had the smallest influence in the suggestion. Not content, then,

with the bare consciousness of my having, in all this navigation business, acted upon the clearest conviction of the political importance of the measure, I would wish that every individual who may hear that it was a favorite plan of mine may know also that I had no other motive for promoting it than the advantage of which I conceived it would be productive to the Union, and to this State in particular, by cementing the eastern and western territory together, at the same time that it will give vigor and increase to our commerce, and be a convenience to our citizens.

How would this matter be viewed, then, by the eye of the world, and what would be the opinion of it, when it comes to be related that George Washington has received twenty thousand dollars and five thousand pounds sterling of the public money as an interest therein? Would not this in the estimation of it (if I am entitled to any merit for the part I have acted, and without it there is no foundation for the act) deprive me of the principal thing which is laudable in my conduct? Would it not, in some respects, be considered in the same light as a pension? And would not the apprehension of this make me more reluctantly offer my sentiments in future? In a word, under whatever pretence and however customarily these gratuitous gifts are made in other countries, should I not thenceforward be considered as a dependant? One moment's thought of which would give me more pain than I should receive pleasure from the product of all the tolls, were every farthing of them vested in me; although I consider it as one

of the most certain and increasing estates in the country.

I have written to you with an openness becoming our friendship. I could have said more on the subject, but I have already said enough to let you into the state of my mind. I wish to know whether the ideas I entertain occurred to, and were expressed by, any member in or out of the House. Upon the whole, you may be assured, my dear sir, that my mind is not a little agitated. I want the best information and advice to settle it. I have no inclination, as I have already observed, to avail myself of the generosity of the country; nor do I wish to appear ostentatiously disinterested (for more than probably my refusal would be ascribed to this motive), nor that the country should harbor an idea that I am disposed to set little value on her favors, the manner of granting which is as flattering as the grant is important. My present difficulties, however, shall be no impediment to the progress of the undertaking. I will receive the full and frank opinions of my friends with thankfulness. I shall have time enough between the sitting of the next Assembly to consider the tendency of the act, and in this, as in all other matters, will endeavor to decide for the best.

To BENJAMIN HARRISON, January 22, 1785.
9 *Sparks*, 83.

13. HE MEANS TO DECLINE THE GIFT.

SHALL ever consider this act as an unequivocal and substantial testimony of the approving voice of my country for the part I have acted on the American theatre, and shall feast upon the recollection of it as often as it occurs to me; but this is all I can or mean to do. It was my first declaration to Congress, after accepting my military appointment, that I would not receive anything for such services as I might be able to render the cause in which I had embarked. It was my fixed determination, when I surrendered that appointment, never to hold any other office under government, by which emolument might become a necessary appendage, or, in other words, which should withdraw me from the necessary attentions which my own private concerns indispensably required; nor to accept of any pecuniary acknowledgment for what had passed. From this resolution my mind has never swerved.

February 27, 1785. 9 *Sparks*, 85.

14. ON SITTING FOR HIS PORTRAIT.

N *for a penny, in for a pound*, is an old adage. I am so hackneyed to the touches of the painter's pencil, that I am now altogether at their beck; and sit, "like Patience on a monument," whilst they are delineating the lines of my face. It is a proof, among many others, of what habit and custom can accomplish. At first I was as impatient at the request,

and as restive under the operation, as a colt is under the saddle. The next time I submitted very reluctantly, but with less flouncing. Now, no dray-horse moves more readily to his thill than I to the painters' chair. It may easily be conceived, therefore, that I yielded a ready obedience to your request and to the views of Mr. Pine.

To FRANCIS HOPKINSON, May 16, 1785. 9 *Sparks*, 106.

15. WAR.

MY first wish is to see this plague to mankind banished from the earth, and the sons and daughters of this world employed in more pleasing and innocent amusements than in preparing implements and exercising them for the destruction of mankind. Rather than quarrel about territory, let the poor, the needy, and oppressed of the earth, and those who want land, resort to the fertile plains of our western country, the *second land of promise*, and there dwell in peace, fulfilling the first and great commandment.

To DAVID HUMPHREYS, July 25, 1785. 9 *Sparks*, 112.

16. THE ONLY BOND OF UNION BETWEEN STATES.

THERE is nothing which binds one country or one State to another but interest. Without this cement the western inhabitants, who more than probably will be composed in a great degree of foreigners, will have no predilection for us.

To RICHARD HENRY LEE, *President of Congress*, August 22, 1785. 9 Sparks, 119.

17. THE PUBLIC DEBT.

IT is much to be wished that public faith may be held inviolable. Painful is it, even in thought, that attempts should be made to weaken its bands. It is a dangerous experiment. Once slacken the reins and the power is lost. And it is questionable with me whether the advocates of the measure foresee all its consequences. It is an old adage that *honesty is the best policy.* This applies to public as well as private life, to States as well as individuals.

To JAMES MADISON, November 30, 1785. 9 *Sparks*, 146.

18. ON THE PHILADELPHIA ABOLITIONISTS INDUCING SLAVES TO LEAVE THEIR MASTERS.

IF the practice of this society is not discountenanced, none of those whose *misfortune* it is to have slaves as attendants will visit the city if they can possibly avoid it; because by so doing they hazard their property, or they must be at the expense (and this will not always succeed) of providing servants of another description.

I hope it will not be conceived from these observations that it is my wish to hold the unhappy people who are the subject of this letter in slavery. I can only say that there is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do to see a plan adopted for the abolition of it; but there is only one proper and effectual mode by which it can be

accomplished, and that is by legislative authority; and this, as far as my suffrage will go, shall never be wanting. But when slaves who are happy and contented with their present masters are tampered with and seduced to leave them; when masters are taken unawares by these practices; when a conduct of this kind begets discontent on one side and resentment on the other; and when it happens to fall on a man whose purse will not measure with that of the society, and he loses his property for want of means to defend it, — it is oppression in such a case, and not humanity in any, because it introduces more evils than it can cure.

To ROBERT MORRIS, April 12, 1786. 9 *Sparks*, 158.

19. SLAVERY.

NEVER mean, unless some particular circumstance should compel me to it, to possess another slave by purchase, it being among my first wishes to see some plan adopted by which slavery in this country may be abolished by law.

To JOHN F. MERCER, September 9, 1786. 9 *Sparks*, 159.

20. HE AGAIN INVITES MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

ADAM, — The tokens of regard with which Miss de Lafayette and my namesake honored the young folks of this family will cement the friendship which seems to be rising in their tender breasts, and will increase those *flames of it* which they have imbibed from their

parents, to which nothing can add strength but the endearments that flow from personal interviews, and the unreserved exchange of liberal sentiments. Will you not then, madam, afford them this opportunity? May we hope for it soon? If the assurances of the sincerest esteem and affection, if the varieties of uncultivated nature, the novelty of exchanging the gay and delightful scenes of Paris, with which you are surrounded, for the rural amusements of a country in its infancy, if the warbling notes of the feathered songsters on our lawns and meads can for a moment make you forget the melody of the opera and the pleasures of the court, these all invite you to give us this honor, and the opportunity of expressing to you personally those sentiments of attachment and love with which you have inspired us.

The noontide of life is now passed with Mrs. Washington and myself; and all we have to do is to spend the evening of our days in tranquillity, and glide gently down a stream which no human effort can ascend. We must therefore, however reluctantly it is done, forego the pleasure of such a visit as you kindly invite us to make. But the case with you is far otherwise. Your days are in their meridian brightness. In the natural order of things, you have many years to come, in which you may indulge yourself in all the amusements which variety can afford and different countries produce, and in receiving those testimonies of respect which every one in the United States would wish to render to you.

My mother will receive the compliments you

honor her with, as flattering marks of attention; and I shall have great pleasure in delivering them myself. My best wishes and vows are offered for you, and for the fruits of your love.

To the MARCHIONESS DE LAFAYETTE, May 10, 1786.
9 *Sparks*, 165.

21. AN OLD LONDON DEBT.

HAD there been no stipulation by treaty to secure debts, nay, more, had there even been an exemption by the legislative authority or practice of this country against it, I would, from a conviction of the propriety and justice of the measure, have discharged my original debt to you.

To WAKELIN WELCH, *London*, July, 1786.
12 *Sparks*, 283.

22. TOLERATION.

BEING no bigot myself to any mode of worship, I am disposed to indulge the professors of Christianity in the church with that road to Heaven which to them shall seem the most direct, plainest, easiest, and least liable to exception.

To the MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, August 15, 1787.
9 *Sparks*, 262.

23. A UNIVERSAL DICTIONARY.

HEARTILY wish the attempt of that singularly great character, the Empress of Russia, to form a universal dictionary, may be attended with the merited success.

To know the affinity of tongues seems to be one step towards promoting the affinity of nations. Would to God the harmony of nations were an object that lay nearest to the hearts of sovereigns; and that the incentives of peace, of which commerce and facility of understanding each other are not the most inconsiderable, might be daily increased! Should the present or any other efforts of mine to procure information respecting the different dialects of the aborigines in America serve to reflect a ray of light on the obscure subject of language in general, I shall be highly gratified. For I love to indulge the contemplation of human nature in a progressive state of improvement and amelioration; and, if the idea would not be considered visionary and chimerical, I could fondly hope that the present plan of the great potentate of the north might in some measure lay the foundation for that assimilation of manners and interests which should one day remove many of the causes of hostility from amongst mankind.

To the MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, January 10, 1788.
9 *Sparks*, 306.

24. UPON THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

S to my sentiments with respect to the merits of the new constitution, I will disclose them without reserve, although by passing through the post-offices they should become known to all the world, for in truth I have nothing to conceal on that subject. It appears to me, then, little short of a miracle that the delegates from so many States, different from each other, as you know, in their manner, circumstances, and prejudices, should unite in forming a system of national government so little liable to well-founded objections. Nor am I yet such an enthusiastic, partial, or undiscriminating admirer of it, as not to perceive it is tinctured with some real though not radical defects. The limits of a letter would not suffer me to go fully into an examination of them; nor would the discussion be entertaining or profitable. I therefore forbear to touch upon it. With regard to the two great points, the pivots upon which the whole must move, my creed is simply, —

First, that the general government is not invested with more powers than are indispensably necessary to perform the functions of a good government; and consequently that no objection ought to be made against the quantity of power delegated to it.

Secondly, that these powers, as the appointment of all rulers will forever arise from, and at some *stated* intervals recur to, the free suffrage of the

people, are so distributed among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, into which the general government is arranged, that it can never be in danger of degenerating into a monarchy, an oligarchy, an aristocracy, or any other despotic or oppressive form, as long as there shall remain any virtue in the body of the people.

I would not be understood, my dear Marquis, to speak of consequences, which may be produced in the revolution of ages, by corruption of morals, profligacy of manners, and listlessness in the preservation of the natural and unalienable rights of mankind, nor of the successful usurpations that may be established at such an unpropitious juncture upon the ruins of liberty, however providently guarded and secured; as these are contingencies against which no human prudence can effectually provide. It will at least be a recommendation to the proposed constitution, that it is provided with more checks and barriers against the introduction of tyranny, and those of a nature less liable to be surmounted, than any government hitherto instituted among mortals. We are not to expect perfection in this world; but mankind, in modern times, have apparently made some progress in the science of government. Should that which is now offered to the people of America be found, on experiment, less perfect than it can be made, a constitutional door is left open for its amelioration.

To the MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, February 7, 1788.
9 *Sparks*, 317.

25. THE HAPPIEST VOCATION.

THE life of a husbandman of all others is the most delightful. It is honorable, it is amusing, and, with judicious management, it is profitable.

To ALEXANDER SPOTSWOOD, February 13, 1788. 9 *Sparks*, 323.

26. UPON THE MARRIAGE OF A FRENCH FRIEND.

A WIFE! Well, my dear Marquis, I can hardly refrain from smiling to find you are caught at last. I saw, by the eulogium you often made on the happiness of domestic life in America, that you had swallowed the bait, and that you would as surely be taken, one day or another, as that you were a philosopher and a soldier. So your day has at length come. I am glad of it, with all my heart and soul. It is quite good enough for you. Now you are well served for coming to fight in favor of the American rebels, all the way across the Atlantic Ocean, by catching that terrible contagion, domestic felicity, which, like the small-pox or the plague, a man can have only once in his life, because it commonly lasts him (at least with us in America; I know not how you manage these matters in France) for his whole lifetime. And yet, after all, the worst wish which I can find in my heart to make against Madame de Chastellux and yourself is, that you may neither of you ever get the *better of this* same domestic felicity, during the *entire course* of your mortal existence.

If so wonderful an event should have occasioned me, my dear Marquis, to write in a strange style, you will understand me as clearly as if I had said, what in plain English is the simple truth, — "Do me the justice to believe that I take a heartfelt interest in whatsoever concerns your happiness." And, in this view, I sincerely congratulate you on your auspicious matrimonial connection. I am happy to find that Madame de Chastellux is so intimately connected with the Duchess of Orleans; as I have always understood that this noble lady was an illustrious example of connubial love, as well as an excellent pattern of virtue in general.

While you have been making love under the banner of Hymen, the great personages in the north have been making war under the inspiration, or rather under the infatuation, of Mars. Now, for my part, I humbly conceive that you have acted much the best and wisest part; for certainly it is more consonant to all the principles of reason and religion, natural and revealed, to replenish the earth with inhabitants, than to depopulate it by killing those already in existence. Besides, it is time for the age of knight-errantry and mad heroism to be at an end. Your young military men, who want to reap the harvest of laurels, do not care, I suppose, how many seeds of war are sown; but for the sake of humanity it is devoutly to be wished that the manly employment of agriculture, and the humanizing benefits of commerce, would supersede the waste of war and the rage of conquest; that the swords might be turned into

ploughsnares, the spears into pruning-hooks, and, as the Scriptures express it, "the nations learn war no more."

To the MARQUIS DE CHASTELLUX, April 25, 1788. 9 *Sparks*, 346.

27. POSTSCRIPT TO THE ABOVE.

INCE writing the above, I have been favored with a duplicate of your letter in the handwriting of a lady, and cannot close this without acknowledging my obligations for the flattering postscript of the fair transcriber. In effect, my dear Marquis, the characters of this interpreter of your sentiments are so much fairer than those through which I have been accustomed to decipher them, that I already consider myself as no small gainer by your matrimonial connection; especially as I hope your amiable amanuensis will not forget, sometimes, to add a few annotations of her own to your original text. *To the same*, May 1, 1788. 9 *Sparks*, 349.

28. TO A YOUNG NEPHEW AT SCHOOL.

EAR GEORGE,— I yesterday received a letter from Mr. Hanson, informing me that you slept from home three nights successively, and one contrary to his express prohibition. Complaints of this nature are extremely painful to me, as it discovers a *degree* of impropriety in your conduct, which, at *your time* of life, your good sense and discretion

ought to point out to you, and lead you to avoid. Although there is nothing criminal in your having slept with a companion of good manners and reputation, as you say you have, yet your absenting yourself from your own lodgings under that pretence may be productive of irregularities and disagreeable consequences; and I now insist upon it, in the most pointed terms, that you do not repeat it without the consent and approbation of Mr. Hanson.

To GEORGE S. WASHINGTON, May 5, 1788.
9 *Sparks*, 365.

29. IMPORTANCE OF PERIODICALS.

FOR myself, I entertain a high idea of the utility of periodical publications, insomuch that I could heartily desire copies of the "Museum," and magazines, as well as common gazettes, might be spread through every city, town, and village in America. I consider such easy vehicles of knowledge more happily calculated than any other to preserve the liberty, stimulate the industry, and meliorate the morals of an enlightened and free people.

To MATHEW CAREY, June 25, 1788. 12 *Sparks*, 296.

30. HIS WAY OF DEALING WITH A NEPHEW WHEN HE HAD BEEN SENT AWAY FROM SCHOOL.

ON my return home last night I found my Nephew Lawrence here, who said he was afraid to remain at your house, and offered to show me some bruises he had

received. Being prepared for it, I was going this morning to correct him; but he begged so earnestly, and promised so faithfully that there should be no cause of complaint against him for the future, that I have suspended the punishment.

To SAMUEL HANSON, August 6, 1788. 9 *Sparks*, 409.

31. TO HIS NEPHEW ON HIS MISCONDUCT AT SCHOOL.

DEAR GEORGE, — It was with equal pain and surprise that I was informed by Colonel Hanson, on Monday last, of your unjustifiable behavior in rescuing your brother from that chastisement which was due to his improper conduct; and which you know, because you have been told it in explicit language, he was authorized to administer whenever he should deserve it. Such refractory behavior on your part I consider as an insult equally offered to myself, after the above communications; and I shall continue to view it in that light, till you have made satisfactory acknowledgments to Colonel Hanson for the offence given him.

It is as much my wish and intention to see justice done to you and your brother, as it is to punish either, when it is merited; but there are proper modes by which this is to be obtained; and it is to be sought by a fair and candid representation of facts which can be supported, and not by vague complaints, disobedience, perverseness, or disobliging conduct, which make enemies without *producing* the smallest good. So often and strenuously have I endeavored to inculcate this advice,

and to show you the advantages which are to be expected from close application to your studies, that it is unnecessary to repeat it. If the admonitions of friendship are lost, other methods must be tried, which cannot be more disagreeable to you than they would be to one who wishes to avoid them, who is solicitous to see you and your brother (the only remaining sons of your father) turn out well, and who is very desirous of continuing your affectionate uncle.

To GEORGE S. WASHINGTON, August 6, 1788.
9 *Sparks*, 410.

32. HIS PROBABLE ELECTION TO THE PRESIDENCY.

N the delicate subject with which you conclude your letter I can say nothing, because the event alluded to may never happen, and because, in case it should occur, it would be a point of prudence to defer forming one's ultimate and irrevocable decision, so long as new data might be afforded for one to act with the greater wisdom and propriety. I would not wish to conceal my prevailing sentiment from you; for you know me well enough, my good sir, to be persuaded that I am not guilty of affectation when I tell you that it is my great and sole desire to live and die in peace and retirement on my own farm. Were it even indispensable that a different line of conduct should be adopted, while you and some others who are acquainted with my heart would acquit, the world and posterity might possibly accuse me of inconsistency and ambition.

Still I hope I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain what I consider the most enviable of all titles the character of *an honest man.*

To ALEXANDER HAMILTON, August 28, 1788.
9 *Sparks*, 419.

33. ADVICE TO A NEPHEW AT SCHOOL.

OU have now arrived at that age when you must quit the trifling amusements of a boy, and assume the more dignified manners of a man. At this crisis, your conduct will attract the notice of those who are about you; and, as the first impressions are generally the most lasting, your doings now may mark the leading traits of your character through life. It is therefore absolutely necessary, if you mean to make any figure upon the stage, that you should take the first steps right. What those steps are, and what general line is to be pursued to lay the foundation of an honorable and happy progress, it is the part of age and experience to point out. This I shall do as far as is in my power, with the utmost cheerfulness; and I trust that your own good sense will show you the necessity of following it.

The first and great object with you at present is, to acquire, by industry and application, such knowledge as your situation enables you to obtain, and as will be useful to you in life. In doing this, two other important advantages will be gained *besides the* acquisition of knowledge, namely, a *habit of* industry, and a disrelish for that profusion

of money and dissipation of time which are ever attendant upon idleness. I do not mean by a close application to your studies that you should never enter into those amusements which are suited to your age and station; they can be made to go hand in hand with each other, and, used in their proper seasons, will ever be found to be a mutual assistance to one another. But what amusements, and when they are to be taken, is the great matter to be attended to. Your own judgment, with the advice of your *real* friends, who may have an opportunity of a personal intercourse with you, can point out the particular manner in which you may best spend your moments of relaxation, better than I can at a distance. One thing, however, I would strongly impress upon you, namely, that, when you have leisure to go into company, it should always be of the best kind that the place you are in will afford; by this means you will be constantly improving your manners and cultivating your mind, while you are relaxing from your books; and good company will ever be found much less expensive than bad. You cannot offer, as an excuse for not using it, that you cannot gain admission there, or that you have not a proper attention paid to you in it. This is an apology made only by those whose manners are disgusting, or whose character is exceptionable; neither of which I hope will ever be said of you.

I cannot enjoin too strongly upon you a due observance of economy and frugality, as you well know yourself the present state of your property

and finances will not admit of any unnecessary expense. The article of clothing is now one of the chief expenses that you will incur, and in this I fear you are not so economical as you should be. Decency and cleanliness will always be the first objects in the dress of a judicious and sensible man. A conformity to the prevailing fashion in a certain degree is necessary; but it does not from thence follow that a man should always get a new coat or other clothes upon every trifling change in the mode, when perhaps he has two or three very good ones by him. A person who is anxious to be a leader of the fashion, or one of the first to follow it, will certainly appear, in the eyes of judicious men, to have nothing better than a frequent change of dress to recommend him to notice. I would always wish you to appear sufficiently decent to entitle you to admission into any company where you may be; but your own knowledge must convince you, that you should be as little expensive in this respect as you properly can. You should always keep some clothes to wear to church or on particular occasions, which should not be worn every day; this can be done without any additional expense; for whenever it is necessary to get new clothes, those which have been kept for particular occasions will then come in as every-day ones, unless they should be of superior quality to the new.

What I have said with respect to clothes will apply, perhaps, more pointedly to Lawrence than to you; and, as you are much older than he is, *and more* capable of judging of the propriety of

what I have here observed, you must pay attention to him in this respect, and see that he does not wear his clothes improperly or extravagantly.

To GEORGE S. WASHINGTON, March 23, 1789.
9 *Sparks*, 481.

34. AMERICAN MANUFACTURES NOT THE RESULT OF A PROTECTIVE TARIFF.

HOUGH I would not force the introduction of manufactures, by extravagant encouragements, and to the prejudice of agriculture, yet I conceive much might be done in that way by women, children, and others, without taking one really necessary hand from tilling the earth. Certain it is, great savings are already made in many articles of apparel, furniture, and consumption. Equally certain it is that no diminution in agriculture has taken place, at the time when greater and more substantial improvements in manufactures were making than were ever before known in America. In Pennsylvania they have attended particularly to the fabrication of cotton cloths, hats, and all articles in leather. In Massachusetts they are establishing factories of duck, cordage, glass, and several other extensive and useful branches. The number of shoes made in one town, and nails in another, is incredible. In that State and Connecticut are also factories of superfine and other broadcloths. I have been writing to our friend General Knox this day to procure me homespun broadcloth of the Hartford fabric, to make a suit of clothes for myself. I hope it will not be a great while before it

will be unfashionable for a gentleman to appear in any other dress. Indeed, we have already been too long subject to British prejudices. I use no porter or cheese in my family but such as is made in America. Both those articles may now be purchased of an excellent quality.

To the MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, January 29, 1789.
9 *Sparks*, 462.

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

1. VIRTUE AND HAPPINESS.

THERE is no truth more thoroughly established, than that there exists, in the economy and course of nature, an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness, between duty and advantage, between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy and the solid rewards of public prosperity and felicity.

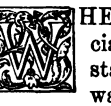
Inaugural Speech to both Houses of Congress, April 30, 1789. 12 *Sparks*, 4.

2. IMPORTANCE OF OUR EXPERIMENT IN GOVERNMENT.

THE preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government, are justly considered as *deeply*, perhaps as *finally*, staked on the experiment intrusted to the hands of the American people.

To the same, same date. 12 *Sparks*, 4.

3. HIS FEELING UPON RE-ENTERING PUBLIC LIFE.



HEN I had judged, upon the best appreciation I was able to form of the circumstances which related to myself, that it was my duty to embark again on the tempestuous ocean of public life, I gave up all expectations of private happiness in this world. You know, my dear sir, I had concentred all my schemes, all my views, all my wishes, within the narrow circle of domestic enjoyment.

Though I flatter myself the world will do me the justice to believe, that, at my time of life and in my circumstances, nothing but a conviction of duty could have induced me to depart from my resolution of remaining in retirement, yet I greatly apprehend that my countrymen will expect too much from me. I fear, if the issue of public measures should not correspond with their sanguine expectations, they will turn the extravagant, and I might almost say undue, praises which they are heaping upon me at this moment into equally extravagant, though I will fondly hope unmerited censures.

So much is expected, so many untoward circumstances may intervene, in such a new and critical situation, that I feel an insuperable diffidence in my own abilities. I feel in the execution of the duties of my arduous office how much I shall stand in need of the countenance and aid of every friend to myself, of every friend to the revolution, *and of* every lover of good government.

To EDWARD RUTLEDGE, May 5, 1789. 10 *Sparks*, 1.

4. PRESIDENTIAL ETIQUETTE.

WHILE the eyes of America, perhaps of the world, are turned to this government, and many are watching the movements of all those who are concerned in its administration, I should like to be informed, through so good a medium, of the public opinion of both men and measures, and of none more than myself; not so much of what may be thought commendable parts, if any, of my conduct, as of those which are conceived to be of a different complexion. The man who means to commit no wrong will never be guilty of enormities; consequently he can never be unwilling to learn what are ascribed to him as foibles. If they are really such, the knowledge of them in a well-disposed mind will go half-way towards a reform. If they are not errors, he can explain and justify the motives of his actions.

At a distance from the theatre of action, truth is not always related without embellishment, and sometimes is entirely perverted, from a misconception of the causes which produce the effects that are the subjects of censure. This leads me to think that the system which I found it indispensably necessary to adopt on my first coming to this city might have undergone severe strictures, and have had motives very foreign from those that govern me assigned as causes thereof. I mean, first, returning no visits; secondly, appointing certain days to receive them generally, not to the exclusion, however, of visits on any other days under

particular circumstances; and, thirdly, at first entertaining no company, and afterwards (until I was unable to entertain any at all) confining it to official characters. A few days evinced the necessity of the two first in so clear a point of view, that, had I not adopted it, I should have been unable to attend to any sort of business, unless I had applied the hours allotted to rest and refreshment to this purpose; for by the time I had done breakfast, and thence till dinner, and afterwards till bedtime, I could not get relieved from the ceremony of one visit, before I had to attend to another. In a word, I had no leisure to read or to answer the despatches that were pouring in upon me from all quarters.

With respect to the third matter, I early received information, through very respectable channels, that the adoption thereof was not less essential than that of the other two, if the President was to preserve the dignity and respect that were due to the first magistrate. For a contrary conduct had involved the late presidents of Congress in insuperable difficulties, and the office, in this respect, in perfect contempt; for the table was considered as a public one, and every person who could get introduced conceived that he had a right to be invited to it. This, although the table was always crowded (and with mixed company, and the President considered in no better light than as a *maître d'hôtel*), was in its nature impracticable, and as many offences given as if no table had been kept.

The citizens of this place were well acquainted

with this fact, and the principal members of Congress in both Houses were so well convinced of the impropriety and degrading situation of their President, that it was the general opinion that the President of the United States should neither give nor receive invitations; some from a belief, independent of the circumstances I have mentioned, that this was fundamentally right, in order to acquire respect. But to this I had two objections, both powerful in my mind: first, the novelty of it I knew would be considered as an ostentatious mimicry of sovereignty; and, secondly, that so great a seclusion would have stopped the avenues to useful information from the many, and made me more dependent on that of the few. But to hit on a discriminating medium was found more difficult than it appeared to be at first view; for, if the citizens at large were begun with, no line could be drawn; all of decent appearance would expect to be invited, and I should have been plunged at once into the evil I was endeavoring to avoid. Upon the whole, it was thought best to confine my invitations to official characters and strangers of distinction. This line I have hitherto pursued. Whether it may be found best to adhere to it, or depart from it, must in some measure be the result of experience and information.

So strongly had the citizens of this place imbibed an idea of the impropriety of my accepting invitations to dinner, that I have not received one from any family (though they are remarkable for hospitality, and though I have received every civility and attention possible from them) since I came to

the city, except to dine with the governor on the day of my arrival; so that, if this should be adduced as an article of impeachment, there can be at least one good reason adduced for my not dining out; to wit, never having been asked to do so.

To DAVID STUART, July 26, 1789. 10 *Sparks*, 17.

5. ON BEING ASKED TO APPOINT A NEPHEW TO OFFICE.

OU cannot doubt my wishes to see you appointed to any office of honor or emolument, in the new government, to the duties of which you are competent; but, however deserving you may be of the one you have suggested, your standing at the bar would not justify my nomination of you as attorney to the federal District Court in preference to some of the oldest and most esteemed general court lawyers in your own State, who are desirous of this appointment. My political conduct in nominations, even if I were uninfluenced by principle, must be exceedingly circumspect and proof against just criticism; for the eyes of Argus are upon me, and no slip will pass unnoticed, that can be improved into a supposed partiality for friends or relations.

To BUSHROD WASHINGTON, July 27, 1789. 10 *Sparks*, 24.

6. THE DEATH OF HIS MOTHER.

WFUL and affecting as the death of a parent is, there is consolation in knowing that Heaven has spared ours to an age beyond which few attain, and favored her

with the full enjoyment of her mental faculties, and as much bodily strength as usually falls to the lot of fourscore. Under these considerations, and a hope that she is translated to a happier place, it is the duty of her relatives to yield due submission to the decrees of the Creator. When I was last at Fredericksburg, I took a final leave of my mother, never expecting to see her more.

To MRS. BETTY LEWIS, September 13, 1789. 10 *Sparks*, 31.

7. HIS LAST LETTER TO DR. FRANKLIN.

THE affectionate congratulations on the recovery of my health, and the warm expressions of personal friendship which were contained in your letter of the 16th instant, claim my gratitude. And the consideration that it was written when you were afflicted with a painful malady greatly increases my obligation for it.*

* *Dr. Franklin's Letter.*

"PHILADELPHIA, 16 September, 1789.

"DEAR SIR, — My malady renders my sitting up to write rather painful to me; but I cannot let my son-in-law, Mr. Bache, part for New York, without congratulating you by him on the recovery of your health, so precious to us all; and on the growing strength of our new government under your administration. For my own personal ease, I should have died two years ago; but, though those years have been spent in excruciating pain, I am pleased that I have lived them, since they have brought me to see our present situation. I am now finishing my eighty-fourth year, and probably with it my career in this life; but in whatever state of existence I am placed hereafter, if I retain any memory of what has passed here, I shall with it retain the esteem, respect, and affection, with which I have long been, my dear friend,

"Yours most sincerely,

"B. FRANKLIN."

Would to God, my dear sir, that I could congratulate you upon the removal of that excruciating pain under which you labor, and that your existence might close with as much ease to yourself as its continuance has been beneficial to our country and useful to mankind; or if the united wishes of a free people, joined with the earnest prayers of every friend to science and humanity, could relieve the body from pains or infirmities, that you could claim an exemption on this score. But this cannot be, and you have within yourself the only resource to which we can confidently apply for relief, a philosophic mind.

If to be venerated for benevolence, if to be admired for talents, if to be esteemed for patriotism, if to be beloved for philanthropy, can gratify the human mind, you must have the pleasing consolation to know that you have not lived in vain. And I flatter myself that it will not be ranked among the least grateful occurrences of your life to be assured, that, so long as I retain my memory, you will be recollected with respect, veneration, and affection by your sincere friend.

September 28, 1789. 10 *Sparks*, 32.

8. MAN NOT RESPONSIBLE TO MAN FOR HIS FAITH.

HILE men perform their social duties faithfully, they do all that society or the state can with propriety demand or expect; and remain responsible only to their Maker for the religion, or modes of faith, *which they* may prefer or profess.

Address to the Quakers, October, 1789. 405 Sparks, 12.

9. HIS EARLY DISTRUST OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

THE revolution which has been effected in France is of so wonderful a nature that the mind can hardly realize the fact. If it ends as our last accounts, to the first of August, predict, that nation will be the most powerful and happy in Europe; but I fear, though it has gone triumphantly through the first paroxysm, it is not the last it has to encounter before matters are finally settled. In a word, the revolution is of too great a magnitude to be effected in so short a space, and with the loss of so little blood. The mortification of the king, the intrigues of the queen, and the discontent of the princes and noblesse, will foment divisions, if possible, in the National Assembly; and they will unquestionably avail themselves of every *faux pas* in the formation of the constitution, if they do not give a more open, active opposition. In addition to these, the licentiousness of the people on one hand, and sanguinary punishments on the other, will alarm the best-disposed friends to the measure, and contribute not a little to the overthrow of their object. Great temperance, firmness, and foresight are necessary in the movements of that body. To forbear running from one extreme to another is no easy matter; and, should this be the case, rocks and shelves, not visible at present, may wreck the vessel, and give a higher toned despotism than the one which existed before.

To GOUVERNEUR MORRIS, October 13, 1789.
10 Sparks, 39.

10. TO THE FATHER OF TWO PRETTY GIRLS WHO HAD WAITED UPON HIM.

EING informed that you have given my name to one of your sons, and called another after Mrs. Washington's family, and being moreover very much pleased with the modest and innocent looks of your two daughters, Patty and Polly, I do for these reasons send each of these girls a piece of chintz; and to Patty, who bears the name of Mrs. Washington, and who waited more upon us than Polly did, I send five guineas, with which she may buy herself any little ornaments she may want, or she may dispose of them in any other manner more agreeable to herself. As I do not give these things with a view to have it talked of, or even to its being known, the less there is said about the matter, the better you will please me; but, that I may be sure the chintz and money have got safe to hand, let Patty, who I dare say is equal to it, write me a line informing me thereof, directed to "The President of the United States at New York." I wish you and your family well, and am your humble servant.

November 8, 1789. 10 *Sparks*, 48.

11. APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE.

N every nomination to office I have endeavored, as far as my own knowledge extended, or information could be obtained, to make fitness of character my *primary object.* If with this the peculiar necessi-

ties of the candidate could be combined, it has been with me an additional inducement to the appointment.

To JOSEPH JONES, November 30, 1789. 10 *Sparks*, 57.

12. PREPARATIONS FOR WAR.

A FREE people ought not only to be armed, but disciplined; to which end a uniform and well-digested plan is requisite.

Speech to both Houses of Congress, January 8, 1790. 12 *Sparks*, 8.

13. HIS OPINION OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

THAT the government, though not actually perfect, is one of the best in the world, I have little doubt. I always believed that an unequivocally free and equal representation of the people in the Legislature, together with an efficient and responsible Executive, was the great pillar on which the preservation of American freedom must depend.

To CATHARINE MACAULAY GRAHAM, January 9, 1790. 10 *Sparks*, 70.

14. UPON HIS BEING ACCUSED OF PRIDE.

IN a letter of last year, to the best of my recollection, I informed you of the motives which *compelled* me to allot a day for the reception of idle and ceremonious visits (for it never has prevented those of sociability and friendship in the afternoon, or at any

other time); but if I am mistaken in this, the history of this business is simply and shortly as follows. Before the custom was established, which now accommodates foreign characters, strangers, and others, who, from motives of curiosity, respect to the Chief Magistrate, or any other cause, are induced to call upon me, I was unable to attend to any business whatsoever; for gentlemen, consulting their own convenience rather than mine, were calling from the time I rose from breakfast, often before, until I sat down to dinner. This, as I resolved not to neglect my public duties, reduced me to the choice of one of these alternatives, either to refuse them altogether, or to appropriate a time for the reception of them. The former would, I well knew, be disgusting to many; the latter I expected would undergo animadversion and blazoning from those who would find fault *with* or *without* cause. To please everybody was impossible. I therefore adopted that line of conduct which combined public advantage with private convenience, and which in my judgment was unexceptionable in itself. That I have not been able to make bows to the taste of poor Colonel B. (who, by the by, I believe never saw one of them) is to be regretted, especially too, as, upon those occasions, they were indiscriminately bestowed, and the best I was master of. Would it not have been better to throw the veil of charity over them, ascribing their stiffness to the effects of age, or to the unskilfulness of my teacher, rather than to *pride* and dignity of office, which God knows has *no charms* for me? For I can truly say, I had

rather be at Mount Vernon, with a friend or two about me, than to be attended at the seat of government by the officers of state and the representatives of every power in Europe.

These visits are optional. They are made without invitation. Between the hours of three and four every Tuesday I am prepared to receive them. Gentlemen, often in great numbers, come and go, chat with each other, and act as they please. A porter shows them into the room, and they retire from it when they please, and without ceremony. At their first entrance, they salute me, and I them, and as many as I can talk to, I do. What pomp there is in all this, I am unable to discover. Perhaps it consists in not sitting. To this, two reasons are opposed: first, it is unusual; secondly, which is a more substantial one, because I have no room large enough to contain a third of the chairs which would be sufficient to admit it. If it is supposed that ostentation, or the fashions of courts (which, by the by, I believe originate oftener in convenience, not to say necessity, than is generally imagined), gave rise to this custom, I will boldly affirm that no supposition was ever more erroneous; for, if I were to give indulgence to my inclinations, every moment that I could withdraw from the fatigue of my station should be spent in retirement. That it is not, proceeds from the sense I entertain of the propriety of giving to every one as free access as consists with that respect which is due to the chair of government; and that respect, I conceive, is neither to be acquired nor preserved but by

observing a just medium between much state and too great familiarity.

Similar to the above, but of a more sociable kind, are the visits every Friday afternoon to Mrs. Washington, where I always am. These public meetings, and a dinner once a week to as many as my table will hold, with the references to and from the different departments of state, and other communications with all parts of the Union, are as much if not more than I am able to undergo; for I have already had, within less than a year, two severe attacks, the last worse than the first. A third, more than probably, will put me to sleep with my fathers. At what distance this may be I know not. Within the last twelve months I have undergone more and severer sickness than thirty preceding years afflicted me with.

To DAVID STUART, June 15, 1790. 10 *Sparks*, 99.

15. WASHINGTON AS A LANDLORD.

FROM long experience I have laid it down as an unerring maxim, that to exact rents with punctuality is not only the *right* of the landlord, but that it is also for the benefit of the tenant that it should be so, unless by providential and uncontrollable events the latter is rendered unable to pay them. In such cases, he should not only meet with indulgence, but in some instances with a remittal of the rent. But in the ordinary course of these *transactions*, the rents ought to be collected with *the most rigid* exactness, especially from my

tenants, who do not, for most of the farms, pay a fourth of what the tenements would let for if they were now in my possession. If it is found difficult for a tenant to pay *one* rent, it is more difficult for him to pay *two*. When *three* are due he despairs, or cares little about them; and if they run to a greater number, it is highly probable, that, to avoid paying any, he will leave you the bag to hold. For these reasons, except under the circumstances before mentioned, it is my desire that you will give all the tenants timely notice that you will grant no indulgences beyond those allowed by the covenants in the leases. If they find you *strict*, they will be *punctual;* if otherwise, your trouble will be quadrupled, and I can have no dependence upon my rents, which are now my principal support.

To ROBERT LEWIS, October 15, 1791. 10 *Sparks*, 198.

16. ADVICE TO A YOUNG ORPHAN NIECE.

CCUPIED as my time now is, and must be during the sitting of Congress, I nevertheless will endeavor to inculcate upon your mind the delicacy and danger of that period to which you are now arrived under peculiar circumstances. You are just entering into the state of womanhood, without the watchful eye of a mother to admonish, or the protecting aid of a father to advise and defend you; you may not be sensible that you are at this moment about to be stamped with that character which will adhere to you through life; the consequences of which you have not perhaps attended to, but be

assured it is of the utmost importance that you should.

Your cousins, with whom you live, are well qualified to give you advice; and I am sure they will, if you are disposed to receive it. But, if you are disobliging, self-willed, and untowardly, it is hardly to be expected that they will engage themselves in unpleasant disputes with you, especially Fanny, whose mild and placid temper will not permit her to exceed the limits of wholesome admonition or gentle rebuke. Think, then, to what dangers a giddy girl of fifteen or sixteen must be exposed in circumstances like these. To be under but little or no control may be pleasing to a mind that does not reflect, but this pleasure cannot be of long duration; and reason, too late perhaps, may convince you of the folly of misspending time. You are not to learn, I am certain, that your fortune is small. Supply the want of it, then, with a well-cultivated mind, with dispositions to industry and frugality, with gentleness of manners, an obliging temper, and such qualifications as will attract notice, and recommend you to a happy establishment for life.

You might, instead of associating with those from whom you can derive nothing that is good, but may have observed everything that is deceitful, lying, and bad, become the intimate companion of, and aid to, your cousin in the domestic concerns of the family. Many girls, before they have arrived at your age, have been found so trustworthy as to take the whole trouble of a family from their mothers; but it is by a steady and rigid

attention to the rules of propriety that such confidence is obtained, and nothing would give me more pleasure than to hear that you had acquired it. The merits and benefits of it would redound more to your advantage in your progress through life, and to the person with whom you may in due time form a matrimonial connection, than to any others; but to none would such a circumstance afford more real satisfaction than to your affectionate uncle.

To HARRIOT WASHINGTON, October 30, 1791.
10 *Sparks*, 201.

17. UPON THE ESTRANGEMENT OF JEFFERSON AND HAMILTON.

OW unfortunate, and how much to be regretted is it, then, that, while we are encompassed on all sides with avowed enemies and insidious friends, internal dissensions should be harrowing and tearing our vitals! The latter, to me, is the most serious, the most alarming, and the most afflicting of the two; and without more charity for the opinions and acts of one another in governmental matters, or some more infallible criterion by which the truth of speculative opinions, before they have undergone the test of experience, are to be forejudged, than has yet fallen to the lot of fallibility, I believe it will be difficult, if not impracticable, to manage the reins of government, or to keep the parts of it together; for if, instead of laying our shoulders to the machine after measures are decided on, one pulls this way and another that, before the utility of the thing is fairly tried, it must inevitably be torn

asunder; and in my opinion, the fairest prospect of happiness and prosperity that ever was presented to man will be lost perhaps forever.

My earnest wish and my fondest hope, therefore, is, that, instead of wounding suspicions and irritating charges, there may be liberal allowances, mutual forbearances, and temporizing yieldings on all sides. Under the exercise of these, matters will go on smoothly, and, if possible, more prosperously. Without them, everything must rub; the wheels of government will clog; our enemies will triumph, and, by throwing their weight into the disaffected scale, may accomplish the ruin of the goodly fabric we have been erecting.

I do not mean to apply this advice, or these observations, to any particular person or character. I have given them in the same general terms to other officers of the government; because the disagreements which have arisen from difference of opinions, and the attacks which have been made upon almost all the measures of government, and most of its executive officers, have for a long time past filled me with painful sensations, and cannot fail, I think, of producing unhappy consequences at home and abroad.

To THOMAS JEFFERSON, *Secretary of State*, August 23, 1792. 10 *Sparks*, 280.

18. THE SAME SUBJECT.

IFFERENCES in political opinion are as unavoidable, as, to a certain point, they may be necessary; but it is exceedingly to be regretted that subjects cannot be

discussed with temper on the one hand, or decisions submitted to without having the motives which led to them improperly implicated on the other; and this regret borders on chagrin, when we find that men of abilities, zealous patriots, having the same *general* objects in view, and the same upright intentions to prosecute them, will not exercise more charity in deciding on the opinions and actions of one another. When matters get to such lengths, the natural inference is, that both sides have strained the cords beyond their bearing, and that a middle course would be found the best, until experience shall have decided on the right way, or (which is not to be expected, because it is denied to mortals) there shall be some infallible rule by which we could forejudge events.

Having premised these things, I would fain hope that liberal allowances will be made for the political opinions of each other; and, instead of those wounding suspicions and irritating charges with which some of our gazettes are so strongly impregnated, and which cannot fail, if persevered in, of pushing matters to extremity, and thereby tearing the machine asunder, that there may be mutual forbearance and temporizing yielding *on all sides.* Without these, I do not see how the reins of government are to be managed, or how the Union of the States can be much longer preserved.

How unfortunate would it be, if a fabric so goodly, erected under so many providential circumstances, and in its first stages having acquired such respectability, should, from diversity of sentiments, or internal obstructions to some of the

acts of government (for I cannot prevail on myself to believe that these measures are as yet the deliberate acts of a determined party), be brought to the verge of dissolution. Melancholy thought! But, at the same time that it shows the consequences of diversified opinions, when pushed with too much tenacity, it exhibits evidence also of the necessity of accommodation, and of the propriety of adopting such healing measures as may restore harmony to the discordant members of the Union, and the governing powers of it.

I do not mean to apply this advice to any measures which are passed, or to any particular character. I have given it in the same *general* terms to other officers of the government. My earnest wish is, that balsam may be poured into *all* the wounds, which have been given, to prevent them from gangrening, and from those fatal consequences which the community may sustain if it is withheld.

To ALEXANDER HAMILTON, *Secretary of the Treasury*, August 26, 1792. 10 *Sparks*, 283.

19. PUTTING IT TO THE TEST.

LIKELY young man in Alexandria, of the name of Turner, has been strongly recommended to me for an ensigncy. It is said, among other things in his favor, that a number of young country-born men would enlist under him. I have answered, Let him ascertain that fact, and then apply with the list of them.

To HENRY KNOX, Secretary of War, September 24, 1792. 10 Sparks, 249.

20. HAMILTON AND JEFFERSON AGAIN.

REGRET, deeply regret, the difference in opinions, which have arisen and divided you and another principal officer of the government; and I wish devoutly there could be an accommodation of them by mutual yieldings.

A measure of this sort would produce harmony and consequent good in our public councils. The contrary will inevitably introduce confusion and serious mischiefs; and for what? Because mankind cannot think alike, but would adopt different means to attain the same ends. For I will frankly and solemnly declare, that I believe the views of both of you to be pure and well meant, and that experience only will decide, with respect to the salutariness of the measures which are the subjects of dispute. Why, then, when some of the best citizens in the United States, men of discernment, uniform and tried patriots, who have no sinister views to promote, but are chaste in their ways of thinking and acting, are to be found, some on one side and some on the other of the questions which have caused these agitations, should either of you be so tenacious of your opinions as to make no allowances for those of the other? I could and indeed was about to add more on this interesting subject, but will forbear, at least for the present, after expressing a wish that the cup which has been presented to us may not be snatched from our lips by a discordance of action, when I am persuaded there is no discord-

ance in your views. I have a great, a sincere esteem and regard for you both, and ardently wish that some line may be marked out by which both of you could walk.

To THOMAS JEFFERSON, *Secretary of State*, October 18, 1792. 10 *Sparks*, 306.

21. HIS GUIDING PRINCIPLE AS PRESIDENT.

ONLY wish, whilst I am a servant of the public, to know the will of my masters, that I may govern myself accordingly.

To EDMUND PENDLETON, September 23, 1793. 10 *Sparks*, 371.

22. UPON AN IMPROVED THRESHING-MACHINE.

THE model brought over by the English farmers may be a good one, but the utility of it among careless negroes and ignorant overseers will depend absolutely upon the simplicity of the construction; for, if there is anything complex in the machinery, it will be no longer in use than a mushroom is in existence. I have seen so much of the beginning and ending of new inventions, that I have almost resolved to go on in the old way of treading, until I get settled again at home, and can attend myself to the management of one. As a proof in point of the almost impossibility of putting the overseers of this country out of the track they *have* been accustomed to walk in, I have one of

the most convenient barns in this or perhaps any other country, where thirty hands may with great ease be employed in threshing. Half of the wheat of the farm was actually stowed in this barn in the straw, by my order, for threshing; notwithstanding, when I came home about the middle of September, I found a treading-yard not thirty feet from the barn-door, the wheat again brought out of the barn, and horses treading it out in an open exposure, liable to the vicissitudes of weather. I am now erecting a building for the express purpose of treading. I have sanguine expectations of its utility; and, if I am not deceived in them, it may afford you some satisfaction, when you come into this part of the country, to call and look at it.

To HENRY LEE, *Governor of Virginia*, October 16, 1793. 10 *Sparks*, 382.

23. NEWSPAPERS.

CANNOT forbear to recommend a repeal of the tax on transportation of public prints. There is no resource so firm for the government of the United States as the affections of the people, guided by an enlightened policy; and to this primary good nothing can conduce more than a faithful representation of public proceedings, diffused without restraint throughout the United States.

Speech to both Houses of Congress, December 3, 1793. 12 *Sparks*, 42.

24. RENT OF LAND THEN.

I WOULD let these four farms to four substantial farmers, of wealth and strength sufficient to cultivate them, and who would insure to me the regular payment of the rents; and I would give them leases for seven or ten years, at the rate of a Spanish milled dollar, or other money current at the time in this country equivalent thereto, for every acre of ploughable and mowable ground, within the enclosures of the respective farms, as marked in the plan; and would allow the tenants, during that period, to take fuel, and use timber from the woodland to repair the buildings, and to keep the fences in order until live fences could be substituted in place of dead ones; but, in this case, no sub-tenants would be allowed.

To ARTHUR YOUNG, December 12, 1793. 12 *Sparks*, 309.

25. HIS AID TO THE VICTIMS OF THE YELLOW FEVER IN PHILADELPHIA.

IT has been my intention, ever since my return to the city, to contribute my mite towards the relief of the *most* needy inhabitants of it. The pressure of public business hitherto has suspended, but not altered, my resolution. I am at a loss, however, for whose benefit to apply the little I can give, and in whose hands to place it; whether for the use *of the* fatherless children and widows, made so by *the late* calamity, who may find it difficult, whilst

provisions, wood, and other necessaries are so dear, to support themselves, or to other and better purposes, if any, I know not, and therefore have taken the liberty of asking your advice.

To WILLIAM WHITE, *Bishop of Pennsylvania* December 31, 1793. 10 *Sparks*, 398.

26. APPOINTMENTS TO OFFICE.

REVEAL with my inauguration I resolved firmly that no man should ever charge me *justly* with deception. Abundant reason I have had to rejoice at this determination; for I have experienced the necessity, in a variety of instances, of hardening my heart against indulgences of my warmest inclination and friendship, and, from a combination of causes, as well as mere fitness of character, to depart from first impressions and first intentions with regard to nominations; which has proved most unequivocally the propriety of the maxim I had adopted, of never committing myself until the moment the appointment is to be made, when, from the best information I can obtain, and a full view of circumstances, my judgment is formed.

To JAMES MCHENRY, April 8, 1794. 10 *Sparks*, 397.

27. PRICE OF WILD LAND.

MY land on the Ohio and Great Kenhawa Rivers, amounting to 32,373 acres, was once sold for sixty-five thousand French crowns to a French gentleman, who was very competent to the payment at the time the

contract was made; but, getting a little embarrassed in his finances by the revolution in his country, by mutual agreement the bargain was cancelled. Lately I have been in treaty for the same land at three dollars and a third per acre for the whole quantity.

To PRESLEY NEVILLE, June 16, 1794. 12 *Sparks*, 317.

28. THE PRESIDENT IS SARCASTIC TOUCHING THE NEWSPAPERS.

HE affairs of this country *cannot go amiss.* There are *so many watchful guardians of them*, and such *infallible guides*, that one is at no loss for a director at every turn.

To GOUVERNEUR MORRIS, June 25, 1794. 10 *Sparks*, 417.

29. A NATIONAL UNIVERSITY.

HAT a national university in this country is a thing to be desired, has always been my decided opinion.

To JOHN ADAMS, *Vice-President of the United States*, November 27, 1794. 11 *Sparks*, 1.

30. EMIGRATION.

Y opinion, with respect to emigration, is, that, except of useful mechanics, and some particular descriptions of men or professions, there is no need of encouragement; while the policy or advantage of its *taking place* in a body (I mean the settling of them *in a body*) may be much questioned; for by so

doing they retain the language, habits, and principles, good or bad, which they bring with them. Whereas, by an intermixture with our people, they or their descendants get assimilated to our customs, measures, and laws; in a word, soon become one people.

To the same, same date. 11 *Sparks*, 2.

31. NO INFALLIBLE GUIDES.

IF any power on earth could, or the Great Power above would, erect the standard of infallibility in political opinions, there is no being that inhabits this terrestrial globe that would resort to it with more eagerness than myself, so long as I remain a servant of the public. But as I have found no better guide hitherto, than upright intentions and close investigation, I shall adhere to those maxims, while I keep the watch; leaving it to those who will come after me to explore new ways, if they like, or think them better.

To HENRY KNOX, September 20, 1795. 11 *Sparks*, 71.

32. UTILITY OF A POTATO CROP.

OF all the improving and ameliorating crops, none, in my opinion, is equal to potatoes, on stiff and hard bound land, as mine is. I am satisfied, from a variety of instances, that on such land a crop of potatoes is equal to an ordinary dressing. In no instance have I failed of good wheat, oats, or clo-

ver, that followed potatoes; and I conceive they give the soil a darker hue.

To THOMAS JEFFERSON, October 4, 1795.
12 *Sparks*, 321.

33. CABINET APPOINTMENTS.

IN the appointments to the great offices of the government, my aim has been to combine geographical situation, and sometimes other considerations, with abilities and fitness of *known* characters.

To EDWARD CARRINGTON, October 9, 1795.
11 *Sparks*, 78.

34. HE FEARS NO DISCLOSURES.

YOU are at full liberty to publish anything that ever passed between us, written or oral, that you think will subserve your purposes. A conscious rectitude, and an invariable endeavor to promote the honor, welfare, and happiness of this country, by every means in the power of the Executive, and within the compass of my abilities, leave no apprehension on my mind from any disclosure whatsoever.

To EDMUND RANDOLPH, October 25, 1795.
11 *Sparks*, 87.

35. HIS FOREIGN POLICY.

MY policy has been, and will continue to be, while I have the honor to remain in the administration, to maintain friendly terms with, but be independent of, all the na-

tions of the earth; to share in the broils of none; to fulfil our own engagements; to supply the wants and be carriers for them all; being thoroughly convinced that it is our policy and interest to do so. Nothing short of self-respect and that justice which is essential to a national character ought to involve us in war; for sure I am, if this country is preserved in tranquillity twenty years longer, it may bid defiance, in a just cause, to any power whatever; such, in that time, will be its population, wealth, and resources.

To GOUVERNEUR MORRIS, December 22, 1795.
11 *Sparks*, 102.

36. THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES NOT THE TREATY-MAKING POWER.

IT is perfectly clear to my understanding, that the assent of the House of Representatives is not necessary to the validity of a treaty.

Message to the House of Representatives, March 30, 1796.
12 *Sparks*, 115.

37. HE ENDEAVORS TO PROCURE THE RELEASE OF LAFAYETTE.

IT will readily occur to your Majesty, that occasions may sometimes exist, on which official considerations would constrain the chief of a nation to be silent and passive, in relation even to objects which affect his sensibility, and claim his interposition as a man. Finding myself precisely in this situation at present, I take the liberty of writing this private letter

to your Majesty, being persuaded that my motives will also be my apology for it.

In common with the people of this country, I retain a strong and cordial sense of the services rendered to them by the Marquis de Lafayette, and my friendship for him has been constant and sincere. It is natural, therefore, that I should sympathize with him and his family in their misfortunes, and endeavor to mitigate the calamities which they experience; among which, his present confinement is not the least distressing.

I forbear to enlarge on this delicate subject. Permit me only to submit to your Majesty's consideration, whether his long imprisonment, and the confiscation of his estates, and the indigence and dispersion of his family, and the painful anxieties incident to all these circumstances, do not form an assemblage of sufferings which recommend him to the mediation of humanity? Allow me, sir, on this occasion, to be its organ, and to entreat that he may be permitted to come to this country, on such conditions and under such restrictions as your Majesty may think it expedient to prescribe.

As it is a maxim with me not to ask what, under similar circumstances, I would not grant, your Majesty will do me the justice to believe that this request appears to me to correspond with those great principles of magnanimity and wisdom which form the basis of sound policy and durable glory.

To the Emperor of Germany, May 15, 1796.
11 Sparks, 125.

38. NON-INTERVENTION.

HAVE always wished well to the French revolution; that I have always given it as my decided opinion that no nation had a right to intermeddle in the internal concerns of another; that every one had a right to form and adopt whatever government they liked best to live under themselves; and that, if this country could, consistently with its engagements, maintain a strict neutrality and thereby preserve peace, it was bound to do so by motives of policy, interest, and every other consideration that ought to actuate a people situated as we are, already deeply in debt, and in a convalescent state from the struggle we have been engaged in ourselves.

To JAMES MONROE, August 25, 1796. 11 *Sparks*, 164.

39. GENERAL EDUCATION.

N proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

Farewell Address to the People of the United States, September 17, 1796. 12 *Sparks*, 227.

40. THE PUBLIC CREDIT.

HERISH public credit. One method of preserving it is, to use it as sparingly as possible; avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering

also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear.

The same. 12 *Sparks*, 227.

41. NATIONAL ANTIPATHIES AND ATTACHMENTS.

HE nation which indulges towards another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests. The nation, prompted by ill-will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times, it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes

perhaps the liberty, of nations has been the victim.

So, likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest, in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained; and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation) facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding, with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practise the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a

small or weak towards a great and powerful nation dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

The same. 12 *Sparks*, 229.

42. OUR TRUE FOREIGN POLICY.

THE great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *political* connection as possible.

The same. 12 *Sparks*, 231.

43. NATIONS GRANT NO FAVORS.

THERE can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

The same. 12 *Sparks*, 233.

44. A MILITARY ACADEMY.

HOWEVER pacific the general policy of a nation may be, it ought never to be without an adequate stock of military knowledge for emergencies.

Speech to both Houses of Congress, December 7, 1796. 12 *Sparks*, 71.

45. HIGH SERVICE SHOULD BE JUSTLY COMPENSATED.

THE compensations to the officers of the United States, in various instances, and in none more than in respect to the most important stations, appear to call for legis-

lative revision. The consequences of a defective provision are of serious import to the government. If private wealth is to supply the defect of public retribution, it will greatly contract the sphere within which the selection of characters for office is to be made, and will proportionally diminish the probability of a choice of men able as well as upright. Besides that it would be repugnant to the vital principles of our own government virtually to exclude, from public trusts, talents and virtue, unless accompanied by wealth.

The same. 12 *Sparks*, 72.

46. PRICE OF LAND IN VIRGINIA.

WITHIN full view of Mount Vernon, separated therefrom by water only, is one of the most beautiful seats on the river for sale, but of greater magnitude than you seem to have contemplated. It is called Belvoir, and belonged to George William Fairfax, who, were he living, would now be Baron of Cameron, as his younger brother in this country (George William dying without issue) at present is, though he does not take upon himself the title. This seat was the residence of the above-named gentleman before he went to England, and was accommodated with very good buildings, which were burnt soon after he left them. There are near two thousand acres of land belonging to the tract, surrounded in a manner by water. The mansion-house stood on high and commanding ground; the soil is not of the best quality, but a considerable

part of it, lying level, may, with proper management be profitably cultivated. There are some small tenements on the estate, but the greater part thereof is in wood. At present it belongs to Thomas Fairfax, son of Bryan Fairfax, the gentleman who will not, as I said before, take upon himself the title of Baron of Cameron. A year or two ago, the price he fixed on the land, as I have been informed, was thirty-three dollars and a third per acre.

To SIR JOHN SINCLAIR, December 11, 1796.
12 *Sparks*, 327.

47. UPON LEAVING THE PRESIDENCY.

SHOULD be very unhappy if I thought that my relinquishing the reins of government would produce any of the consequences which your fears forebode. In all free governments, contentions in elections will take place, and, whilst it is confined to our own citizens, it is not to be regretted; but severely indeed ought it to be reprobated, when occasioned by foreign machinations. I trust, however, that the good sense of our countrymen will guard the public weal against this and every other innovation, and that, although we may be a little wrong now and then, we shall return to the right path with more avidity. I can never believe that Providence, which has guided us so long and through such a labyrinth, will withdraw its protection at this crisis.

To JONATHAN TRUMBULL, March 8, 1797.
11 Sparks, 191.

AFTER HIS PRESIDENCY.

AFTER HIS PRESIDENCY.

1. FARMS TOO LARGE.

YOUR strictures on the agriculture of this country are but too just. It is indeed wretched; but a leading, if not the primary, cause of its being so is, that, instead of improving a little ground well, we attempt much and do it ill. A half, a third, or even a fourth of what we mangle, well wrought and properly dressed, would produce more than the whole under our system of management.

To WILLIAM STRICKLAND, *in England*, July 15, 1797. 12 *Sparks*, 329.

2. HE PREFERS HEDGES TO FENCES.

I AM not surprised that our mode of fencing should be disgusting to a European eye. Happy would it have been for us, if it had appeared so in our own eyes; for no sort of fencing is more expensive or wasteful of timber. I have been endeavoring for years to substitute live fences in place of them; but my long absence from home has in this, as in every-

thing else, frustrated all my plans that required time and particular attention to effect them. I shall now, although it is too late in the day for me to see the result, begin in good earnest to ditch and hedge; the latter I am attempting with various things, but believe none will be found better than cedar, although I have several kinds of white thorn growing spontaneously on my own grounds.

To the same, same date. 12 *Sparks*, 332.

3. UPON THE PROSPECT OF A WAR WITH FRANCE.

T cannot be necessary for me to premise to you, or to others, who know my sentiments as well, that, to quit the tranquil walks of retirement, and enter a boundless field of responsibility and trouble, would be productive of sensations which a better pen than I possess would find it difficult to describe. Nevertheless, the principles by which my conduct has been actuated through life would not suffer me, in any great emergency, to withhold any services I could render, required by my country; especially in a case where its dearest rights are assailed by lawless ambition and intoxicated power, contrary to every principle of justice, and in violation of solemn compacts and laws which govern all civilized nations; and this, too, with the obvious intent to sow thick the seeds of disunion, for the purpose of subjugating the government, and destroying our independence and happiness.

In circumstances like these, accompanied by an *actual* invasion of our territorial rights, it would

be difficult at any time for me to remain an idle spectator under the plea of age or retirement. With sorrow, it is true, I should quit the shades of my peaceful abode, and the ease and happiness I now enjoy, to encounter anew the turmoils of war, to which, possibly, my strength and powers might be found incompetent.

To JAMES MCHENRY, *Secretary of War*, July 4, 1798. 11 *Sparks*, 247.

4. HIS POLITICS.

WISH well to all nations and to all men. My politics are plain and simple. I think every nation has a right to establish that form of government under which it conceives it may live most happy; provided it infracts no right, or is not dangerous to others; and that no governments ought to interfere with the internal concerns of another, except for the security of what is due to themselves.

To GENERAL LAFAYETTE, December 25, 1798. 11 *Sparks*, 382.

5. HE GIVES AN EXTREMELY COLD SHOULDER TO A SELF-APPOINTED ENVOY.

R. LEAR, my secretary, being from our lodgings on business, one of my servants came into the room where I was writing, and informed me that a gentleman in the parlor below desired to see me; no name was sent up. In a few minutes I went down, and found the Rev. Dr. Blackwell and Dr. Logan there. I advanced towards and gave my hand to the former;

the latter did the same towards me. I was backward in giving mine. He, possibly supposing from hence that I did not recollect him, said his name was Logan. Finally, in a very cool manner, and with an air of marked indifference, I gave him my hand, and asked *Dr. Blackwell to be seated;* the other *took* a seat at the same time. I addressed *all* my conversation to Dr. Blackwell; the other *all* his to me, to which I only gave negative or affirmative answers, as laconically as I could, except asking how Mrs. Logan did. He seemed disposed to be very polite, and, while Dr. Blackwell and myself were conversing on the late calamitous fever, offered me an asylum at his house, if it should return, or I thought myself in any danger in the city, and two or three rooms by way of accommodation. I thanked him slightly, observing there would be no call for it.

About this time Dr. Blackwell took his leave. We all rose from our seats, and I moved a few paces towards the door of the room, expecting the other would follow, and take his leave also. Instead of which he kept his ground, and proceeded to inform me more particularly (for he had mentioned it before), that he had seen General Lafayette at Hamburg, and his lady and daughter (I think in France), and related many things concerning them. He said something also respecting an interview he had had with our minister, Mr. Murray, in Holland; but, as I remained standing, and showed the utmost inattention to what he was saying, I do not now recollect what the purport of it was, except that he hurried from thence

to Paris, his object being, he said, to get there before the departure of our *commissioners*, as he called them.

He observed that the situation of our affairs in this country, and the train they were in with respect to France, had induced him to make the voyage in hope, or expectation, or words to that effect, of contributing to their amelioration. This drew my attention more pointedly to what he was saying, and induced me to remark, that there was something very singular in this; that *he*, who could only be viewed as a private character, unarmed with proper powers, and presumptively unknown in France, should suppose he could effect what three gentlemen of the first respectability in our country, specially charged under the authority of the government, were unable to do. With this observation he seemed a little confounded, but, recovering, said, that not more than five persons had any knowledge of his going; that he was furnished by Mr. Jefferson and Mr. McKean with certificates of his citizenship; and that M. Merlin, President of the Directory of France, had discovered the greatest desire that France and America should be on the best terms. I answered, that *he* was more fortunate than our envoys, for they could neither be received nor heard by M. Merlin or the Directory; that if the powers of France were serious in their professions, there was a plain and effectual way by which that object could be accomplished, namely, to repeal all the obnoxious *arrêts*, by which the commerce and rights of this country had been invaded, put

an end to further depredations on both, and made restitution for the injuries we had received. A conduct like this, I said, would speak more forcibly than words; for the latter never made an impression on my mind, when they were contradicted by actions.

He said that the Directory was apprehensive that this country, the government of it, or our envoys, I am not now sure which he meant or alluded to, was not well disposed towards France. I asked what better evidence could be given in refutation of this opinion, than its long-suffering of the outrageous conduct of that nation towards the United States, and despatching three gentlemen of unquestionable worth, with ample powers to reconcile all differences even at the expense of great sacrifices on our part; and asked him if the Directory looked upon us as worms, not even allowed to turn when trod upon; for it was evident to all the world, that we had borne, and forborne, beyond what even common respect for ourselves permitted. He replied, that they had taken off the embargo, and were making restitution of property, mentioning one instance, I think. With respect to the embargo, I observed, that taking it off, or continuing it on, was a matter of no great importance, if, as I had been informed, our vessels in French ports were few. He said that the attempt at a coalition of European powers against France would come to nothing; that the Directory were under no apprehensions on that ground; and that Great Britain would have *to contend* alone; insinuating, as I conceived his

ject at the time to be, that we should be in-
ved in a dangerous situation, if we persisted in
r hostile appearances. To this I finally replied,
ıt we were driven to those measures in self-
ence, and I hoped the spirit of this country
uld never suffer itself to be injured with impu-
y by any nation under the sun. To this, he
l *he told Citizen Merlin*, that, if the United
.tes were invaded by France, they would unite
a man to oppose the invaders.

Memorandum, November 13, 1798. 11 *Sparks*, 384.

DIRECTIONS FOR HIS MANAGER, WRITTEN FOUR DAYS BEFORE HIS DEATH.

FROM the various plans suggested by you at different times for cropping the farms, which I propose to retain in my own hands, in the year 1800, and with a re-ed force of the laborers on them, and the opera-ıs necessary to carry them into effect; compar- these with the best reflections I have been e to make on the subject; and considering, reover, the exhausted state of my arable fields, l how important it is to adopt some system by ich the evil may be arrested, and the fields in ıe measure restored by a rotation of crops, ich will not press hard upon them, while suffi-ıt intervals are allowed for improvement; I have ested the following instructions for my man-r, and for the government of my overseers, and uest that they may be most *strictly* and *point-y* attended to and executed, as far as the meas-s therein required will admit.

A *system* closely pursued, although it may not in all its parts be the best that could be devised, is attended with innumerable advantages. The conductor of the business, in this case, can never be in any dilemma in his proceedings. The overseers, and even the laborers, know what is to be done, and what they are capable of doing, in ordinary seasons. The force to be employed may be in due proportion to the work which is to be performed, and a reasonable and tolerably accurate estimate may be made of the product. But when no plan is fixed, when directions flow from day to day, the business becomes a mere chaos, frequently shifting, and sometimes at a stand, for want of knowing what to do, or the manner of doing it. Thus is occasioned a waste of time, which is of more importance than is generally imagined.

Nothing can so effectually obviate the evil as an established *system*, made known to all who are actors in it, that all may be enabled thereby to do their parts to advantage. This gives ease to the principal conductor of the business, and is more satisfactory to the persons who immediately overlook it, less harassing to the laborers, as well as more beneficial to the employer.

Under this view of the subject, the principal service which you can render me is to explain to the overseers (who will be furnished with duplicates) the plan, in all its parts, which is hereafter detailed; to hear their ideas with respect to the order in which the different sorts of work therein pointed out shall succeed each other, for the purpose of carrying it on to the best advantage; to

correct any erroneous projects they may be disposed to adopt; and then to see that they adhere strictly to whatever may be resolved on, and that they are always (except when otherwise permitted) on their farms, and with their people. The work, under such circumstances, will go on smoothly; and, that the stock may be well fed, littered, and taken care of according to the directions, it will be necessary to inspect the conduct of the overseers in this particular, and those also whose immediate business it is to attend upon them, with a watchful eye; otherwise, and generally in severe weather, when attention and care are most needed, they will be most neglected.

Economy in all things is as commendable in the manager as it is beneficial and desirable to the employer; and, on a farm, it shows itself in nothing more evidently, or more essentially, than in not suffering the provender to be wasted, but, on the contrary, in taking care that every atom of it be used to the best advantage; and, likewise, in not permitting the ploughs, harness, and other implements of husbandry, and the gears belonging to them, to be unnecessarily exposed, trodden under foot, run over by carts, and abused in other respects. More good is derived from attending to the minutiæ of a farm, than strikes people at first view; and examining the farm-yard fences, and looking into the fields to see that nothing is there but what is allowed to be there, is oftentimes the means of producing more good, or at least of avoiding more evil, than can be accomplished by riding from one working party or overseer to an-

other. I have mentioned these things not only because they have occurred to me, but because, although apparently trifles, they prove far otherwise in the result.

The account for the present quarter must be made final, as an entire new scene will take place afterwards. In doing this, advertise in the Alexandria paper for the claims of every kind and nature whatsoever against me to be brought to you by the 1st of January, that I may wipe them off, and begin on a fresh score. All balances in my favor must either be received, or reduced to specialties, that there may be no disputes hereafter.

To JAMES ANDERSON, *Manager of the Farms*, December 10, 1799. 12 *Sparks*, 359.

7. LAST ENTRIES IN HIS DIARY.

DECEMBER 11*th*. — But little wind, and raining. Mercury 44 in the morning, and 38 at night. About nine o'clock the wind shifted to the northwest, and it ceased raining, but continued cloudy. Lord Fairfax, his son Thomas, and daughter, Mrs. Warner Washington and son Whiting, and Mr. John Herbert, dined here, and returned after dinner.

12*th*. — Morning cloudy; wind at northeast; mercury 33. A large circle round the moon last night. About one o'clock it began to snow; soon after, to hail, and then turned to a settled cold rain. Mercury 28 at night.

13*th*. — Morning snowing, and about three *inches deep*. Wind at northeast, and mercury at

30. Continued snowing till one o'clock, and about four it became perfectly clear. Wind in the same place, but not hard. Mercury 28 at night.

December, 1790. 12 *Sparks*, 381.

8. HIS LAST WORDS AS RECORDED BY TOBIAS LEAR, HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY.

ON Thursday, December 12th, the General rode out to his farms about ten o'clock, and did not return home till past three. Soon after he went out, the weather became very bad, rain, hail, snow, falling alternately, with a cold wind. When he came in, I carried some letters to him to frank, intending to send them to the post-office in the evening. He franked the letters, but said the weather was too bad to send a servant to the office that evening. I observed to him, that I was afraid he had got wet. He said, No, his great-coat had kept him dry. But his neck appeared to be wet, and the snow was hanging upon his hair. He came to dinner (which had been waiting for him) without changing his dress. In the evening he appeared as well as usual.

A heavy fall of snow took place on Friday, which prevented the General from riding out as usual. He had taken cold, undoubtedly from being so much exposed the day before, and complained of a sore-throat. He, however, went out in the afternoon into the ground between the house and the river to mark some trees, which were to be cut down in the improvement of that spot. He had a

hoarseness, which increased in the evening; but he made light of it.

In the evening the papers were brought from the post-office, and he sat in the parlor with Mrs. Washington and myself reading them, till about nine o'clock, when Mrs. Washington went up into Mrs. Lewis's room, who was confined, and left the General and myself reading the papers. He was very cheerful, and when he met with anything interesting or entertaining, he read it aloud as well as his hoarseness would permit. He requested me to read to him the Debates of the Virginia Assembly, on the election of a Senator and Governor; and, on hearing Mr. Madison's observations respecting Mr. Monroe, he appeared much affected, and spoke with some degree of asperity on the subject, which I endeavored to moderate, as I always did on such occasions. On his retiring, I observed to him, that he had better take something to remove his cold. He answered, "No; you know I never take anything for a cold. Let it go as it came."

Between two and three o'clock, on Saturday morning, he awoke Mrs. Washington, and told her that he was very unwell, and had had an ague. She observed that he could scarcely speak, and breathed with difficulty, and would have got up to call a servant. But he would not permit her, lest she should take a cold. As soon as the day appeared, the woman (Caroline) went into the room to make a fire, and Mrs. Washington sent her immediately to call me. I got up, put on my clothes as quickly as possible, and went to his

chamber. Mrs. Washington was then up, and related to me his being ill as before stated. I found the General breathing with difficulty, and hardly able to utter a word intelligibly. He desired Mr. Rawlins (one of the overseers) might be sent for to bleed him before the doctor could arrive. I despatched a servant instantly for Rawlins, and another for Dr. Craik, and returned again to the General's chamber, where I found him in the same situation as I had left him.

A mixture of molasses, vinegar, and butter was prepared to try its effects in the throat; but he could not swallow a drop. Whenever he attempted it, he appeared to be distressed, convulsed, and almost suffocated. Rawlins came in soon after sunrise, and prepared to bleed him. When the arm was ready, the General, observing that Rawlins appeared to be agitated, said, as well as he could speak, "Don't be afraid." And when the incision was made, he observed, "The orifice is not large enough." However, the blood ran pretty freely. Mrs. Washington not knowing whether bleeding was proper or not in the General's situation, begged that much might not be taken from him, lest it should be injurious, and desired me to stop it; but when I was about to untie the string, the General put up his hand to prevent it, and, as soon as he could speak, he said, "More, more." Mrs. Washington being still very uneasy, lest too much blood should be taken, it was stopped after taking about half a pint. Finding that no relief was obtained from bleeding, and that nothing would go down the throat, I proposed bathing it

externally with *sal volatile*, which was done, and in the operation, which was with the hand, and in the gentlest manner, he observed, "It is very sore." A piece of flannel dipped in *sal volatile* was put around his neck, and his feet bathed in warm water, but without affording any relief.

In the mean time, before Dr. Craik arrived, Mrs. Washington desired me to send for Dr. Brown of Port Tobacco, whom Dr. Craik had recommended to be called, if any case should ever occur that was seriously alarming. I despatched a messenger immediately for Dr. Brown between eight and nine o'clock. Dr. Craik came in soon after, and, upon examining the General, he put a blister of cantharides on the throat, took some more blood from him, and had a gargle of vinegar and sage tea prepared, and ordered some vinegar and hot water for him to inhale the steam of it, which he did; but in attempting to use the gargle he was almost suffocated. When the gargle came from the throat, some phlegm followed, and he attempted to cough, which the doctor encouraged him to do as much as possible; but he could only attempt it. About eleven o'clock, Dr. Craik requested that Dr. Dick might be sent for, as he feared Dr. Brown would not come in time. A messenger was accordingly despatched for him. About this time the General was bled again. No effect, however, was produced by it, and he remained in the same state, unable to swallow anything.

Dr. Dick came about three o'clock, and Dr. Brown arrived soon after. Upon Dr. Dick's seeing *the General*, and consulting a few minutes with

Dr. Craik, he was bled again. The blood came very slow, was thick, and did not produce any symptoms of fainting. Dr. Brown came into the chamber soon after, and, upon feeling the General's pulse, the physicians went out together. Dr. Craik returned soon after. The General could now swallow a little. Calomel and tartar emetic were administered, but without any effect.

About half past four o'clock he desired me to call Mrs. Washington to his bedside, when he requested her to go down into his room, and take from his desk two wills, which she would find there, and bring them to him, which she did. Upon looking at them he gave her one, which he observed was useless, as being superseded by the other, and desired her to burn it, which she did, and took the other and put it into her closet.

After this was done, I returned to his bedside and took his hand. He said to me: "I find I am going. My breath cannot last long. I believed from the first that the disorder would prove fatal. Do you arrange and record all my late military letters and papers. Arrange my accounts and settle my books, as you know more about them than any one else, and let Mr. Rawlins finish recording my other letters, which he has begun." I told him this should be done. He then asked me if I recollected anything which it was essential for him to do, as he had but a very short time to continue with us. I told him, that I could recollect nothing, but that I hoped he was not so near his end. He observed, smiling, that he certainly was, and that, as it was the debt which we must

all pay, he looked to the event with perfect resignation.

In the course of the afternoon he appeared to be in great pain and distress, from the difficulty of breathing, and frequently changed his posture in bed. On these occasions I lay upon the bed and endeavored to raise him, and turn him with as much ease as possible. He appeared penetrated with gratitude for my attentions, and often said, "I am afraid I shall fatigue you too much"; and upon my assuring him that I could feel nothing but a wish to give him ease, he replied, "Well, it it is a debt we must pay to each other, and I hope, when you want aid of this kind, you will find it."

He asked when Mr. Lewis and Washington Custis would return. (They were then in New Kent.) I told him about the 20th of the month.

About five o'clock Dr. Craik came again into the room, and, upon going to the bedside the General said to him: "Doctor, I die hard, but I am not afraid to go. I believed, from my first attack, that I should not survive it. My breath cannot last long." The Doctor pressed his hand, but could not utter a word. He retired from the bedside, and sat by the fire absorbed in grief.

Between five and six o'clock Dr. Dick and Dr. Brown came into the room, and with Dr. Craik went to the bed, when Dr. Craik asked him if he could sit up in the bed. He held out his hand, *and I raised* him up. He then said to the physi*cians: "I feel* myself going; I thank you for your

attentions; but I pray you to take no more trouble about me. Let me go off quietly. I cannot last long." They found that all which had been done was without effect. He lay down again, and all retired except Dr. Craik. He continued in the same situation, uneasy and restless, but without complaining; frequently asking what hour it was. When I helped him to move at this time, he did not speak, but looked at me with strong expressions of gratitude.

About eight o'clock the physicians came again into the room, and applied blisters and cataplasms of wheat-bran to his legs and feet, after which they went out, except Dr. Craik, without a ray of hope. I went out about this time, and wrote a line to Mr. Law and Mr. Peter, requesting them to come with their wives (Mrs. Washington's grand-daughters) as soon as possible to Mount Vernon.

About ten o'clock he made several attempts to speak to me before he could effect it. At length he said: "I am just going. Have me decently buried; and do not let my body be put into the vault in less than three days after I am dead." I bowed assent, for I could not speak. He then looked at me again and said: "Do you understand me?" I replied, "Yes." "'T is well," said he.

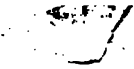
About ten minutes before he expired (which was between ten and eleven o'clock), his breathing became easier. He lay quietly; he withdrew his hand from mine, and felt his own pulse. I saw his countenance change. I spoke to Dr. Craik, who sat by the fire. He came to the bedside.

The General's hand fell from his wrist. I took it in mine, and pressed it to my bosom. Dr. Craik put his hands over his eyes, and he expired without a struggle or a sigh.

December 14, 1779. 12 *Sparks*, 557.

THE END.

Cambridge: Printed by Welch, Bigelow, & Co.



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